

The Bible Echo Articles

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William Warren Prescott

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Armada Camp-meeting Sermons

[CD-ROM Editor's Note: For the historical background to the Armada Camp-meeting Talks, please refer to <http://www.aplib.org/LWFV10N3.pdf>.]

1895

December 2, 1895

Abiding in Christ and Walking in Christ

WWP

W. W. Prescott

October 20, 1895 Armadale Camp-meeting Talk

“He that saith He abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk even as He walked.” *1 John 2:6. BEST December 2, 1895, page 372.1*

Abiding and walking are the lessons of this text. As a result of abiding in Christ, we ought to walk as He walked. The first lesson is abiding in Christ. “Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide, in Me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without Me ye can do nothing.” *John 15:4, 5*. Christ says, “I am the true Vine.” There are a great many that profess to be vines; but I am the real vine, I am the Vine that has life. We are the branches. But in the Scripture Christ is spoken of as a branch. “Behold, I will bring forth My servant the Branch.” “Behold the man whose name is the Branch; and He shall grow up out of His place, and He shall build the temple of the Lord.” *Zechariah 3:8; 6:12*. “For he shall grow up before Him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see Him there is no beauty that we should desire Him.” *Isaiah 53:2*. “I am the vine, ye are the branches.” But the Scripture speaks of Christ Himself as the branch. Christ is a branch unto God that He may be a vine unto us. *BEST December 2, 1895, page 372.2*

Before any branch can grow, there must be some life underneath that does not show itself. So the branch is after all only a root which has come up in sight, but which depends for life upon the roots that draw life from the soil. God is the source of all things; but He comes in sight to men in *BEST December 2, 1895, page 372.3*

JESUS CHRIST THE BRANCH,

WWP

and Christ the branch is but the root of God, growing up in sight that men may see it, and God be manifested. When Jesus Christ came to the world, it was God manifesting Himself; but because the root came up out of what appeared to be dry ground, because it did not manifest itself in the way that men thought it ought to, they did not recognize it. They thought it was something not to be desired, and so they rejected it; and yet it was a branch springing up from the root of life, it was God manifesting Himself to the world so that He could be seen. Clouds and darkness are round about His throne; yet He manifested Himself, so that the world, if they would, might see Him in the Branch.*BEST December 2, 1895, page 372.4*

Christ became a branch unto God in order that He might be a vine unto other branches. But the branch abides in the vine only by having a living connection with it. Just as soon as the branch is severed from the vine, though it is put back again with great care, it no longer abides in the Vine. It will not abide in the vine except it be grafted, and the success of this grafting depends upon making such a connection that the life from the vine shall flow into the branch again.*BEST December 2, 1895, page 372.5*

And we must abide in Christ as—*BEST December 2, 1895, page 372.6*

THE BRANCH ABIDES IN THE VINE,

so that very life of God shall be our life. The branch is full of life, yet it has no life of its own. So we must present ourselves every day to be filled with life from God. Just the moment the connection is severed between the branch and the vine, just that moment the branch ceases to live. That is the lesson of abiding in Christ. As the branch is connected with the vine, filled with life, yet needing all the time to be filled, so we are to be connected with Christ, wholly dependent upon Him for life.*BEST December 2, 1895, page 372.7*

That is the lesson; what is the application?—"He that saith he

abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk even as He walked.” If the branch is connected with the vine, it bears the fruit of the vine. God in Christ is the true Vine, but the fruit of the grape vine is not found directly on the stalk. The fruit is found on the branches. Christ is our vine, and those who, through becoming connected with Him, are His branches, will bring forth the same fruit as He did when He was here, a branch Himself. That is to say, they will walk even as He walked. This brings before us the thought of—*BEST December 2, 1895, page 372.8*

CHRIST OUR EXAMPLE

“He that saith he abideth in Him, ought himself also so to walk even as He walked.” Not as men say He walked, but as *He walked*. And how shall we know how He walked? -By reading and studying His life. That is where we find how Christ walked, and there we will find how we ought to walk. And we will walk as He walked, not wholly as an *obligation*, but as a *result*. If one says he abides in Christ, and walks not as He walked, his life is contrary to his profession. We do not get into Christ by trying to walk as He walked; we do not abide in Christ by trying to walk as He walked; but we first get into Christ, and then as a consequence, just as the branch will bring forth the fruit of the vine, so will the Christian, who really abides in Christ, bring forth the same fruit that He bore, walking as He walked.*BEST December 2, 1895, page 372.9*

If we abide in Him, we will walk in His steps, and He has left us an example that we should walk in His steps. There are many people who take it upon themselves to point out what are Christ’s footsteps; but His word is the test, and in it we may find whether they are pointing out the right footsteps or not. There are in the world to-day many false conceptions of Christ, which amount really to having a false Christ. It is not what our *idea* of Christ is, but what *He is*, that is to be our example; not what we have been taught that Christ is, but what word says that He is.*BEST December 2, 1895, page 372.10*

It was revealed unto Simeon “that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ,” and that is what we want to see. Not any man’s idea of what Christ ought to be, but the Lord’s Christ.

That is the Christ of the word, and our idea of how Christ walked should be formed wholly by the word.*BEST December 2, 1895, page 372.11*

A PRACTICAL TEST

And now let us test it that way. It is quite likely that as soon as we begin to talk of walking with Christ, there comes up the thought, Christ walked on the water; and you surely do not expect us to walk on the water. Let me call your attention to an incident at the beginning of Christ's ministry: "And Jesus, walking by the Sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishers. And He saith unto them, Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets and followed Him." *Matthew 4:18-20*. Before Christ walked *on* the sea, He walked *by* the sea on the land; and before He saw Peter on the water, He saw him on the land and told him to follow Him, and Peter left his nets and followed Him. Later on in Christ's ministry, we find that after He had fed the five thousand, His disciples took ship to go across the lake, but He went apart into a mountain to pray; "and when the evening was come, He was there alone. But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves; for the wind was contrary. And in the fourth watch of the night Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea." *Matthew 14:23-25*. But notice that before He walked on the sea, He had spent the night in secret prayer. "But the ship was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with the waves: for the wind was contrary." So is our ship. Very likely just now some ship is being tossed by the waves of human tempest. And in the fourth watch of the night, Jesus came to them from His season of secret prayer, walking on the sea. "And when the disciples saw Him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, It is a spirit; and they cried out for fear. But straightway Jesus spake unto them, saying, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid." Let Him say that to you now. "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid." "And Peter answered Him, and said, Lord, if it be Thou, bid me come unto Thee on the water. And He Said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord save me. And immediately Jesus stretched forth His hand and caught him, and

said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?"
*Verses 26-31. Christ's walk on the sea was**BEST December 2, 1895, page 372.12*

THE WALK OF FAITH

But Peter failed because of his lack of faith. It is contrary to nature to walk on the water, and it is contrary to our nature to walk as Christ walked; but He says to us as He said to Peter, "Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid." Whether it be on land or on sea, His word is a rock; and when He puts His word beneath our feet, He builds for us a bridge of rock, and it makes no difference whether He puts that bridge on land, or water, or in the sky.*BEST December 2, 1895, page 372.13*

But Peter sank. And the Peter that sank that night on the water is the Peter that sank that other night, in failing to testify for Jesus. The reason in both cases was his lack of faith. In every walk of Christ there is a lesson for us, and as it is unnatural for man to walk on water, so it is unnatural for him to walk as Christ walked-in obedience to the character of God; but power is given through faith in God's word, "Come unto Me."*BEST December 2, 1895, page 372.14*

Although Christ was God in the flesh, yet He did not escape—*BEST December 2, 1895, page 372.15*

THE CRITICISM OF MEN

as to the way He walked. Observe the record: "And it came to pass as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold many publicans and sinners came and sat down with Him and His disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it,"-Who is a Pharisee?-He is a man who has undertaken to be his own Saviour, and is very confident in his own power to do the work. It does not matter whether he lived eighteen hundred years ago, or whether he lives to-day. Who is a Christian? One who depends upon Christ as his Saviour, and has all confidence in Him.*BEST December 2, 1895, page 372.16*

Christ came in contact with Pharisees who were making themselves

holy, and they found fault with Him for eating with publicans and sinners, and “they said unto His disciples, Why eateth your master with publicans and sinners? But when Jesus heard that, He said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy and not sacrifice; for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” *Matthew 9:10-13*. When they found fault with the way He was walking, He said, I am walking according to the Scriptures, and if you were following those Scriptures, you would not find fault with Me. These men were the leaders of the religious thought of the day. They were looked upon as the teachers of the people, and they prided themselves in that position. Yet they criticised Christ’s walk. *BEST December 2, 1895, page 373.1*

Let us read another record: “And when the chief priests and the scribes saw the wonderful things that He did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David; they were sore displeased.” What displeased them?-Because the children cried Hosanna to Christ and not to the scribes and Pharisees. “And said unto Him, Hearest Thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise?” I am walking in accordance with the Scriptures. *BEST December 2, 1895, page 373.2*

Let us turn to Mark’s Gospel on this point; “And it came to pass that He went through the cornfields on the Sabbath day; and His disciples began, as they went, to pluck the ears of corn. And the Pharisees said unto Him, Behold, why do they on the Sabbath day that which is not lawful?” *Mark 2:23, 24*. For what did they find fault with Him this time? The first time it was about sitting down and eating with sinners; but it was His glory to receive sinners then, and it is so *now*. The second time they found fault with Him about the children singing His praises. Let them sing them now. The third time it was because He did not keep the Sabbath day according to their idea, and how does He meet it? “Have ye never read what David did, when he had need and was an hungered, he and all that were with him?” If you had read the Scriptures, you would not have found fault with Me in that way. The principles laid down in the Scriptures are the principles which govern My life, but I am not walking

according to your interpretation of the Scriptures.*BEST December 2, 1895, page 373.3*

December 9, 1895

Abiding in Christ and Walking in Christ

WWP

W. W. Prescott

With those who desire the truth, as soon as the truth is presented to them, the controversy is at an end. Those who desire an argument will dodge from one point to another, as did the Pharisees with Christ.*BEST December 9, 1895, page 380.1*

“And He entered again into the synagogue; and there was a man there which had a withered hand. And they watched Him, whether He would heal him on the Sabbath day.” The same controversy again. “And He saith unto the man which had the withered hand, Stand forth. And He saith unto them, Is it lawful to do good on the Sabbath days, or to do evil? to save life, or to kill? But they held their peace.” *Mark 3:1-4*. Well they might; for there was nothing to be said. And He healed the man.*BEST December 9, 1895, page 380.2*

THE CONTROVERSY IN CHRIST’S TIME AND OURS

In Christ’s time the controversy between Him and the Pharisees was how to keep the Sabbath; and when Christ settled it, He settled it on the basis of the Scriptures. The controversy to-day is, Which day shall we keep for the Sabbath? Settle it on the same ground. That is walking as Christ walked. “He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk even as He walked,” not as people say He walked. If someone says that Christ kept the first day of the week, go to the Bible, and ask for the record. If some claim that the Sabbath was changed by Him or by the apostles in honour of His resurrection, ask for a “Thus saith the Lord.” The word is our only safe guide. Walk as He walked. The man who walks as Christ walks will not necessarily walk as the leading religious teachers of the day walk. Christ did not; for it was the Pharisees who found fault with Him. Christ did not conform His life to their ideas. He told them what the Scripture said, and told them that He was walking in accordance

to that word. And to-day let that word settle every controversy.*BEST December 9, 1895, page 380.3*

CHRIST THE MANIFESTATION OF THE CHARACTER OF GOD

When Christ, looking back over His life of thirty-three years, said that He had finished the work His Father gave Him to do, how did He sum it all up? "All things that I have heard of My Father I have made known unto you." "If ye keep My commandments, ye shall abide in My love, even as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love." *John 15:15, 10*. In this statement we have not so much a command as an example, and when Christ said that, He gave His complete biography. When he said, "I have kept My Father's commandments," He gave His whole life-history. And what does it mean?-I have manifested the character of My Father. What, then, does it mean to keep the commandments?-It means to manifest the character of God as it appeared in Jesus Christ. Nothing short of that is keeping the commandments. The Pharisees prided themselves that they were keeping the commandments, but Christ said, "Ye know not the Scriptures." What they knew about the Scriptures, they had learned by the head. What we learn about the Scriptures, we must learn by *heart*, "the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know,"-know it really and truly by *heart*.*BEST December 9, 1895, page 380.4*

When Christ told them that He had kept His Father's commandments, He told them that He was the manifestation of God on the earth. He told them in those words that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself; He told them that He did not speak His own words, but the words of His Father. "The Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works." He told them that He was the Word of God on the earth, because He was declaring the character of God. He told them He was Jesus Christ. All this He told them in these words: "I have kept My Father's commandments." Christ was a man, the Son of man. There has, then, been one man who walked this earth, and kept the commandments of God. He is our example. We are to walk as He walked.*BEST December 9, 1895, page 380.5*

CAN WE KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS?

When we thus learn from the Scriptures that keeping the commandments is manifesting the character of God, we may say, It is impossible for us to do that. That is a good beginning. We cannot do it, that is true. But who did keep the commandments?-Jesus Christ. And who can do it over again, even in sinful flesh?-Jesus Christ. And how shall we walk as He walked? "And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and *walk in them*; and I will be their God, and they shall be My People." *2 Corinthians 6:16*. God dwelt in Christ and walked in Christ. Christ was the branch unto God that He might be the vine unto us, that the life through Him might flow into us as branches, that we might bear the fruit of the vine.*BEST December 9, 1895, page 380.6*

"He that saith he abideth in Him ought himself also so to walk even as He walked." Let the scripture tell how He walked: "I have kept my Father's commandments." The life of God abides in him who abides in Christ, and the scripture is fulfilled, "I will dwell in them and *walk in them*." God in Christ, by His Holy Spirit dwelling in the man, walks in him. This shows how we can walk as Christ walked.*BEST December 9, 1895, page 380.7*

But first of all, take what the word of God says. Do not take what man says. Let the light of God shine upon His word. Let His Holy Spirit teach us the blessed living truth of His word, and God Himself will fulfil His word in everyone who thus receives it.*BEST December 9, 1895, page 380.8*

But let us read further: "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes, and ye shall keep My judgments and do them." *Ezekiel 36:26, 27*. That is the promise of God. But when He says, "My Child, this way," and I choose to go another way, He does not cause us to walk in His way. He does not cause us to do contrary to our will in this matter. But when one says, Lord, show me the way (*Psalms 119:33*), He shows him the way, and causes him to walk in it. That is the way of His working.*BEST December 9, 1895, page 380.9*

The blessed Bible teaches us the same truth in a hundred different ways. Suppose we turn to a page of what we may call God's picture book. To help children to understand, we give them pictures to illustrate what we are teaching. We are but children, and God often tells us a truth by putting a picture before us. Here is one:—*BEST December 9, 1895, page 380.10*

"And great multitudes came unto Him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and He healed them." Could any one be much worse off? They were in a terrible plight, but "He healed them." "Insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see; and they glorified the God of Israel." *Matthew 15:30, 31.* We are lame; we cannot walk as Christ walked. Christ had a noble walk. We cannot walk that kind of a walk. What does He do for us? He healed *them*; cannot He heal *us*? *BEST December 9, 1895, page 380.11*

Here is another of God's pictures, which we have looked at many times. It is the picture of the man lame from his mother's womb. Take the Scripture just as it reads. What was the matter with this man? He was lame. And how long had he been lame?—All his life. What did Peter say to him?—"Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have give I thee: in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk." What then? "And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up, and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength." And when he had received strength, what did he do?—"And he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking and leaping, and praising God." But he had to receive strength in the name of Jesus of Nazareth before he could walk. And the people "were filled with wonder and amazement at that which had happened unto him." "And when Peter saw it, he answered unto the people, Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this?" Ye men that believe in Israel's God, why do ye wonder at this? Do you not believe in a God of power? "Why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness we had made this man to walk?" *Acts 3:6-12. BEST December 9, 1895, page 380.12*

No man can make another walk as Christ walked if he has not the strength to walk that way. It is through faith in Jesus of Nazareth. "And His name, through faith in His name, hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know; yea, the faith which is by Him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all." Israel's God lives to-day, and the same power that touched that man who never had walked and made him able to walk, can take the worst sinner, who never has stepped one step in the steps of Jesus Christ, and make him to walk as Christ walked. "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." *BEST December 9, 1895, page 380.13*

Here is another picture to show us that we can walk as He walked through faith in His name: "And there sat a certain man at Lystra, impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked." But he had heard Paul speak, and the message had taken hold of his heart. Paul saw that he had faith to be healed, and he "said with a loud voice, stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped and walked." *Acts 14:8-10*. And he walked like a well man. He was made well in order that he might do this. That is the work of Jesus Christ. And to-day by His power we can walk as He walked. "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him." *Colossians 2:6*. And to walk in Him is the only way we can walk as He walked. *BEST December 9, 1895, page 380.14*

"And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour." *Ephesians 5:2*. Many people have a very incorrect idea of what it means to walk in love. They seem to have an idea that it is to get up a kind of ecstasy so that they do not know where they are or what they are doing. It means to them to get above the ordinary things of life. This is not the correct view. The Scripture defines exactly what it means to walk in love. "And this is love that we walk after His commandments." *2 John 6*. "For this is the love of God that we keep His commandments." *1 John 5:3*. "If ye love Me," Christ said, "keep My commandments." "If ye keep My Commandments, ye shall abide in My love, even as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love." *John 15:10*. The

love of God is not a sentimental emotion, not a fanatical frenzy of experience. Christ worked at the carpenter's bench during the greater part of His life. He went down to Nazareth and was subject to His parents. His walk as a young man is the walk for every young man. Christ tells us how to love Him. He does not accept anything else.*BEST December 9, 1895, page 380.15*

It is of great importance for us to—*BEST December 9, 1895, page 381.1*

GET A RIGHT IDEA OF JESUS CHRIST

Let a man get a wrong idea of Him, and He will devote his life to his false idea, and sacrifice the lives of all who do not see his Christ as He sees Him. Take, for instance, the example of Paul. He was looking for Messiah; but it was *his* Messiah, not the Lord's Messiah, so that when the Lord's Messiah came he did not see Him. Some did, and believed on Him, and Paul immediately began to persecute them because they did not believe on *his* Christ. "For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it." "In the *Jews'* religion." God's religion never persecuted anybody. It is man's religion that leads one to persecute those who do not see *his* Christ. God's religion never does so. "And profited in the Jews' religion above many my equals in mine own nation." Observe what the Jews' religion was. "Being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers." *Galatians 1:13, 14*. He was zealous of the traditions of his fathers, not of the word of God. "But when it pleased God who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by His grace, to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood. Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them that were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother. Now the things which I write unto yon, behold, before God, I lie not. Afterward I came into the region of Syria and Cilicia; and was unknown by face unto the churches of Judea which were in Christ; but they had heard only, that he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth the faith

which once he destroyed. And they glorified God in me.” *Galatians 1:15-24*. It is important that we have a true idea of Christ.*BEST December 9, 1895, page 381.2*

CHRIST IS ALL AND IN ALL,

and in order to walk as He walked, we must know Him in His capacity of adapting Himself to us. The Scripture sets Him forth in this way, that we may appropriate the love of God to ourselves.*BEST December 9, 1895, page 381.3*

“I am the door.” *John 10:7*. That is the entrance. No man can enter except through Christ.*BEST December 9, 1895, page 381.4*

“I am the way.” *John 14:6*. I am the door and the way to walk in.*BEST December 9, 1895, page 381.5*

“I am the light of the world.” *John 8:12*. I am the door, the way, the light. This is a dark world, and we need a light.*BEST December 9, 1895, page 381.6*

“I am that bread of life.” *John 6:48*. We need strength to walk in the way. “I am that bread of life.”*BEST December 9, 1895, page 381.7*

“I am the good shepherd.” *John 10:11*. He is the companion who goes with His sheep.*BEST December 9, 1895, page 381.8*

“I am... the life.” *John 14:6*. This is the power for the way.*BEST December 9, 1895, page 381.9*

“I am the resurrection.” *John 11:25*. That is the end of the road.*BEST December 9, 1895, page 381.10*

I am the door, I am the way, I am the light, I am the bread, I am the Good Shepherd, I am the life, I am the resurrection. That is: I am the entrance, the road, the light to walk by, the strength to walk with, the companion by the way, the power for the way, and the end of the way. And so David in the 23rd Psalm says, “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me.” Jesus Christ’s walk extends not simply to the grave, but through the grave.

And because of this, we may go through the valley of the shadow of death, and not be left in it. "I am the resurrection and the life;" and he who abides in Christ, who is the door, the way, the light, the bread, the Good Shepherd, the life, and the resurrection, does walk "even as He walked." *BEST December 9, 1895, page 381.11*

December 16, 1895

Sermons in Stone

WWP

W. W. Prescott

October 23, 1895 Armadale Camp-meeting Talk

Some poet has spoken of seeing sermons in stones, and this will be our study this morning—to see “sermons in stones.” *BEST December 16, 1895, page 388.1*

“Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well; whose branches run over the wall. The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him; but his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the Mighty God of Jacob (from thence is the shepherd, *the stone of Israel*).” “To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious, ye also, as living stones, are built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ” *Genesis 49:22-24; 1 Peter 2:4, 5*. We shall see different cases, where, under one experience and another, one record and another, this thought of the “living stone” is brought out. *BEST December 16, 1895, page 388.2*

“Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim. And Moses said unto Joshua, choose us out men, and go out, fight with Amalek; to-morrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand. So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek; and Moses, Aaron, and Hur went up to the top of the hill. And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses’ hands were heavy; and they took a *stone*, and put it under him, and He sat thereon.” *Exodus 17:8-12* The fact that Moses sat upon a stone means something more than simply that he had something to sit upon. It indicates that it was the God of Israel, “the stone of Israel,” who gave him the victory. *BEST December 16, 1895, page 388.3*

We have, too, the case of David and Goliath. We need not take time to read how the Philistines had defeated the army of Israel, and how Goliath came out morning after morning to defy them. David, who was but a shepherd boy at this time, came down to visit his brethren. They rather despised him. "And Eliab's anger was kindled against David, and he said, Why camest thou down hither? and with whom hast thou left those few sheep in the wilderness?" *1 Samuel 17:28*. David came from keeping the sheep. A shepherd is one who keeps his sheep, not loses them. Christ is the Good Shepherd.*BEST December 16, 1895, page 388.4*

David, after talking with Saul, obtained his consent to go out and fight Goliath, and "Saul armed David with his armour, and he put a helmet of brass upon his head; also he armed him with a coat of mail." He thought that if David was going to fight against Goliath, he would need armour. "And David said unto Saul, I cannot go with these; for I have not proved them. And David put them off him. And he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag which he had, even in a scrip; and his sling was in his hand: and he drew near to the Philistine. And the Philistine came on and drew near unto David; and the man that bare the shield went before him. And when the Philistine looked about and saw David, he disdained him; for he was but a youth, and ruddy, and of a fair countenance. And the Philistine said unto David, Am I a dog, that thou comest to me with staves? And the Philistine cursed David by his gods. And the Philistine said to David, Come to me, and I will give thy flesh unto the fowls of the air, and to the beasts of the field. Then said David to the Philistine, Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield; but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied.... And it came to pass when the Philistine arose, and came, and drew nigh to meet David, that David hasted, and ran toward the army to meet the Philistine. And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, that the stone sunk into his forehead; and he fell upon his face to the earth. So David prevailed over the Philistine with a sling and with a stone." *1 Samuel 17:38-50.BEST December 16, 1895,*

David went out in the name of the Lord, and Jesus went with him to give him the victory simply by a stone. It was not simply David's power and accuracy that caused that stone to sink into the forehead of the Philistine. It was the power of the Lord, who was fighting the battle for him. That record is for us. We have battles to fight against the enemy of the Lord of hosts, and we prevail over him with a stone. David without armour, without implements of warfare, David going forth in the faith of the Lord of hosts, is the example for us. He prevailed with a stone. Jesus Christ, the living stone, is our strength and power for our battles with the enemy.*BEST December 16, 1895, page 388.6*

A BUILDING OF PREPARED STONES

In *1 Kings 6*, we have a record of the building of Solomon's temple. In the *7th verse* is a description of the house: "And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither; so that there was neither hammer nor ax nor any tool of iron heard in the house, while it was in building." The stones of this temple were quarried out and hewn, and each stone fitted for its particular place in the temple, before they were brought together; and then when they were brought from the quarry, each stone fitted into its place. The building was put together, stone upon stone, and there was heard no sound of ax or hammer. "They prepared timbers and stones to build the house." But all the preparing was done before they were fitted together.*BEST December 16, 1895, page 388.7*

"Ye also as lively stones, are built up—*BEST December 16, 1895, page 388.8*

A SPIRITUAL HOUSE,

a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Christ Jesus. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious; and he that believeth on Him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe He is precious; but unto them which be disobedient,

the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient." *1 Peter 2:4-8*. Christ is the living stone; and as soon as we come in contact with Him, we become living stones. Apart from Him, we are dead; but coming in contact with Him, we are built up a spiritual house for Him, "whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end" (*Hebrews 3:6*); "Jesus Christ Himself, being the chief cornerstone." *Ephesians 2:20*. "For ye are the temple of the living God." *2 Corinthians 6:16*. And the whole house, fitly framed together, groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord. We are built together for an habitation of God. Each believer is a temple of God, and then the believers are built together, and that makes the church, which is the temple of the living God, He, by His Holy Spirit, taking up His dwelling place there. *BEST December 16, 1895, page 388.9*

We become living stones because He is a living stone, and we are built upon Him. Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid. "I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up." He will gather again a people with which to build His church. He is at work now, preparing the stones for His temple. They are being quarried and hewn, each one to fill his place in the temple of God. When that temple is complete, the work will be done. *BEST December 16, 1895, page 388.10*

PREPARING THE STONES

In Hosea we have again brought to view the figure of preparation: "O Ephraim, what shall I do unto thee? O Judah, What shall I do unto thee? for your goodness is as a morning cloud, and as the early dew it goeth away. Therefore have I hewed them by the prophets." The Lord takes us out of the quarry, rough unhewn stones. That is the beginning of our experience. Each individual is to be fitted for his particular place in the temple of God. And when the temple is fitted together, it will be without the sound of ax or hammer. That is done before. It is then that He says, "Come, ye blessed of My Father." But we are not to wait till that time to prepare. The work of preparing these rough, unhewn stones must

be done before. I once visited a cemetery in which was a very beautiful statue of a man standing by a chair. It was of heroic size; and the attendant called my attention to the fact that that was all carved out of one stone. The sculptor, when he started, saw an immense stone, but he also saw the man and the chair. As he looks, he loses sight of the rough edges, and sees instead a man of heroic size, standing there perfect. Everything else must be cut away, and he goes to work with his tools. He wants the world to see what he sees, and so he cuts away everything but the man and the chair.*BEST December 16, 1895, page 389.1*

God takes us, rough, unlikely-looking stones; but He sees in us an expression of His character, and He looks upon us, not as rough stones, but as what we may be. Even then He sees in us Jesus Christ. And so He goes to work to cut and to polish. What is He doing? Some would think that He was destroying the whole thing. But He has a place for that stone, and He wants it cut in a particular way. These are the hard experiences of life, when it seems as if Christ would pound us to pieces. But He will not spoil His stone. He knows exactly the place it is to fill in His temple, and He is cutting it so that it will fit. The Lord carries on His work of preparing, that a people may be prepared, each one to fit in his place in the heavenly temple, and each one becomes a living stone, because of his contact with Christ, the living stone. God will develop in each one just that phase of character that will fit the best in the place He wants filled. When He comes, He says, Let the work of preparation cease. "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still; and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still." *Revelation 22:11.BEST December 16, 1895, page 389.2*

When we receive Jesus Christ, God sees in us that perfection of character which we may attain. He knows what He purposes to do with us. He gives us the character of Christ, and then looks upon that character and so "we are accepted in the Beloved." He accepts us, not for what we are, but for what He purposes to make of us and for what Christ is. He will make of each one of us a stone for His temple. The Master-builder looks at the rough stone, and sees in it His model of perfection. He accepts us, not for what we are, but for what He is.*BEST December 16, 1895, page 389.3*

December 23, 1895

Sermons in Stone

WWP

W. W. Prescott

Let us turn to another line of thought. "And He gave unto Moses, when He had made an end of communing with him upon Mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God." *Exodus 31:18*. In *Exodus 34:28* we are told what was written there. You will remember that when Moses came down from the mount the first time, he found that the children of Israel had broken God's commandments already, and were worshipping idols; and that when he saw them, he cast the two tables of stone down and broke them. Then God told him to prepare two more tables. You see in this the rewriting of the law. Man in the first place broke the law. God then wrote it on the tables of stone. After He had written it there to tell them in words what His character was, Jesus Christ came to interpret it in His life. Jesus Christ was the one who spoke the law on Sinai; and when He came, in human flesh, He sat upon another mount, and spoke the law over again. We have it in the sermon on the mount. It was the same law, the same Christ, the same principles, but He was opening it out. He not only opened it out in words, but He Himself was the law, the expression of God's character. He tells us what God is, not only in His word, but by *being* that among us. He was God manifest in the flesh. "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." *BEST December 23, 1895, page 396.1*

Then Christ is the stone, the stone of Israel. God wrote the law perfectly and completely in the first place on the tables of stone, and gave them to the people. Then He wrote that same law upon the Living Stone and gave it to the people. Thus, you will see, Christ is the living law. That was putting the law in stone the second time. Here, then we have the law in stone twice; on the tables of stone, written with the finger of God, and on the Living Stone, Christ, and presented to the people. *BEST December 23, 1895, page 396.2*

Let us consider for a moment—*BEST December 23, 1895, page 396.3*

THE LAW WRITTEN ON THE TABLES OF STONE

“Moreover the law entered that the offence might abound.” It came to give the knowledge of sin, and to condemn sin. “The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law.” *Romans 5:20; 1 Corinthians 15:56*. Sin is not taken into account where there is no law. Sin results in death. “Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.” *James 1:15*. The law on the tables of stone, simply as the ten words of God, condemns to death. “Death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” Then when we meet the law simply as God’s code, it means death to us. But God has put that same law upon *living* stone, and when we meet it written on the Living Stone, it means life to us; but it is still the same law. We must either meet the law upon the tables of stone, and be condemned and put to death by it, or we must meet it upon the Living Stone, and be made alive by it. But we must meet it. God does not ask us whether we want to or not. What we say makes no difference. But whether we are condemned or made alive by it, it is the law of God just the same. It is our attitude toward it that makes the difference. The law in Jesus Christ is—*BEST December 23, 1895, page 396.4*

THE LAW OF THE SPIRIT OF LIFE

He is the Living Stone, the Rock of Ages*BEST December 23, 1895, page 396.5*

“And whosoever shall fall on this stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder.” *Matthew 21:44*. One of two things must happen: We must fall on the stone, or the stone must fall on us. If we fall on the stone, we come down on top; we shall be broken, and He will heal us. If we fall the other way, the stone comes down on top, and it grinds us to powder. One of these experiences comes to every one. Shall we fall on the living stone, or shall it fall on us, and grind us to powder? We must meet the law of God out of Christ or in Christ. When we meet God out of Christ, He is a consuming fire; when we meet Him in Christ, He is our glory.

We must be hidden in the Rock in order to see the glory of God without perishing. I beseech you to think most earnestly of this lesson. We must be brought face to face with the law of God. When the Spirit of God brings the law before our minds, and brings conviction, it is that we may be forgiven and cleansed.*BEST December 23, 1895, page 396.6*

GOD'S GREAT PURPOSE

Let me call your attention to another point. God's purpose in history, in types, in shadows, in ceremonies, is to preach the gospel; and even in some of those things that seem to us the most forbidding, God is still preaching the gospel. I doubt not that in the minds of many there has been a feeling that stoning to death was a terrible punishment, and how many look to it as a way of preaching the gospel? You remember that in the days of the theocracy of God, when His law was the law of the nation, any offence against it was punished by stoning. But in this method of punishing for breaking the national law, God was preaching the gospel. If you will make a study of this, and look up each of the ten commandments, you will find that the punishment for breaking it as a national law was stoning. And how was the gospel preached in this? God was teaching the people, in this form of punishment, that the law *out of Christ* would stone them to death. Just as these literal stones killed them, the law in dead stone would put them to death. He was even in this way teaching them of the Living Stone, the Stone of Israel, the law in life, and that is the gospel.*BEST December 23, 1895, page 396.7*

“And when the tempter came to Him, he said, If thou be the Son of God,—*BEST December 23, 1895, page 396.8*

COMMAND THAT THESE STONES BE MADE BREAD

Matthew 4:3 It seems as if God has put lessons for us even in the devil's mouth. Some preach Christ through envy, but nevertheless Christ is preached. “If Thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread.” Christ's work on this earth was to change stones to bread, that the law which on the tables of stone

condemns and kills should be changed in Him, the Living Stone, into the very bread of life. His work all through His career was to change stones into bread, put the law into the gospel, change death into life, and become the living life. He said, "I am the bread of life," and at the same time He is the Stone of Israel. The law of God, lived by Christ, becomes life, and He says the commandment is life everlasting. So while Christ refused for His own benefit to change literal stones into bread, yet His whole life was spent in changing stones into bread to satisfy the longing of hungry souls. When we receive the law of God in Christ, it has power to make us like unto Himself.*BEST December 23, 1895, page 396.9*

A BUILDING ALL GLORIOUS WITHIN

This lesson of stones goes all through the Scripture. Suppose we take the lesson found in *1 Kings 6:14*: "So Solomon built the house, and finished it." Remember that this house was built of stone. From the outside, all that could be seen was stone; and you know that sometimes a stone building looks rather cold and uninviting. "So Solomon built the house, and finished it. And he built the walls of the house within with boards of cedar, both the floor of the house, and the walls of the ceiling; and he covered them on the inside with wood, and covered the floor of the house with planks of fir. And he built twenty cubits on the sides of the house, both the floor and the walls with boards of cedar; he even built them for it within, even for the oracle, even for the most holy place. And the house, that is, the temple before it, was forty cubits long. And the cedar of the house within was carved with knops and open flowers: all was cedar; *there was no stone seen.*"*BEST December 23, 1895, page 396.10*

"So Solomon overlaid the house within with pure gold." From the outside it was building of stone, nothing but stone. But inside there was not a stone to be seen. Stand outside of Christ, look from without at the Christian life, and all you see is two tables of stone. It seems forbidding; but come inside. You need not take down the stone to do this. Come inside, and the building is aflame with gold. It is only those who stand outside who complain that it is a hard law which they have to keep. Come inside; there are no stones to be seen inside, and yet they are not taken away. By them the building stands. Suppose you take them away, what becomes of the rest of

the building?-Down it falls. Takes away the law, and the gospel comes with it. You cannot keep the pure gold of the gospel apart from the law. Come inside. There you will see nothing but pure gold.*BEST December 23, 1895, page 396.11*

Another thought. Just as soon as you enter a building of gold, your image will be reflected everywhere. Christ would have us reflect *His* image in the temple of the living God.*BEST December 23, 1895, page 396.12*

All through the Scripture mention is made of walled cities, and these walls were made of stones. Jerusalem was—*BEST December 23, 1895, page 396.13*

A WALLED CITY

The wall was meant as a protection. But if a city is shut in with a wall, no matter how elaborate, if there is a flaw in it, the protection is gone. The enemy never attacks a walled city that has a breach in the wall anywhere except at the open place. You will find that this idea of the wall is made very prominent throughout the Scriptures. We will notice it in Nehemiah. He was sorry because the city of his fathers lay waste, and the wall was torn down; and he proposed to go up and rebuild the city and the wall. “But it came to pass,” he says in his record, “that when Sanballat heard that we builded the wall, he was wroth, and took great indignation, and mocked the Jews. And he spake before his brethren and the army of Samaria, and said, What do these feeble Jews? Will they fortify themselves? Will they sacrifice? Will they make an end in a day? Will they revive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish which are burned?” *Nehemiah 4:1, 2*. What do they think they are going to do? The stones are buried. Do these feeble Jews think that they are going to recover them? “Now Tobiah the Ammonite was by him, and he said, Even that which they build, if a fox go up, he shall even break down their stone wall. Hear, O our God, for we are despised; and turn their reproach upon their own head, and give them for a prey in the land of captivity, and cover not their iniquity, and let not their sin be blotted out from before Thee; for they have provoked Thee to anger before the builders. So built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof; for the people had a mind to

GOD'S WALL FOR HIS PEOPLE

We read in Mark that a certain man planted a vineyard and set a hedge about it. What was the hedge for?-Protection. The Lord brought up His vine out of Egypt, and set it anew, and built a hedge about it. That is the purpose of a wall-to protect and keep out the enemy; but the wall must be complete. God has built a wall for His people. The law is this protection, but in order to be a complete protection, it must be a complete wall. Our safety is in having a complete wall; but they have broken down the wall sadly. It is God's purpose to have it built again. "Is not this the fast that I have chosen," He says, "to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? When thou seest the naked, that thou cover him, and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily; and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the Lord shall by thy rereward. Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and He shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity; and if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday: and the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not. And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in. If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the LORD, honourable; and shalt honour him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words: then shalt thou delight thyself in the LORD; and I will cause thee to ride upon the high places of the earth, and feed thee with the heritage of Jacob thy father: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it." *Isaiah 58:6-14* *BEST December 23, 1895, page 397.1*

A BREACH TO BE REPAIRED

There has been a breach made in the wall God would set about His people. It is to be repaired, and God's people are to be hedged in with a perfect law, every commandment is to be restored. And "they shall be called, The repairer of the breach." Every man builds over against his own house. Are *you* building over against your house in repairing the breach? If so, the wall will be built again, even in troublous times.*BEST December 23, 1895, page 397.2*

This is only a mere hint of what is contained in the Scripture about stones. God would have us keep His words in mind, that we may live in them, and that above all, and in all, and through all, we shall see Jesus Christ, the Stone of Israel, the Rock of Ages*BEST December 23, 1895, page 397.3*

1896

January 6, 1896

The Word Became Flesh

WWP

W. W. Prescott

October 31, 1895 Armadale Camp-meeting Talk

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us.” The Revised Version says, “The Word became flesh.” *BEST January 6, 1896, page 4.1*

The theme of redemption will be the science and the song of the eternal ages, and well may it occupy our minds during our short stay here. There is no portion of this great theme that makes such a demand upon our minds in order to appreciate it in any degree, as the subject we shall study to-night,—“The Word became flesh, and dwelt among us.” Through Him all things became; now He Himself *became*. He who had all glory with the Father, now lays aside His glory and becomes flesh. He lays aside His divine mode of existence, and takes the human mode of existence, and God becomes manifest in the flesh. This truth is the very foundation of all truth. *BEST January 6, 1896, page 4.2*

A HELPFUL TRUTH

And Jesus Christ becoming flesh. God being manifest in the flesh, is one of the most helpful truths, one of the most instructive truths, the truth above all truths, which humanity ought to rejoice in. *BEST January 6, 1896, page 4.3*

I desire this evening to study this question for our personal, present benefit. Let us command our minds to the utmost, because to comprehend that the Word became flesh and dwelt among us,

demands all our mental powers. Let us consider, first, what kind of flesh; for this is the very foundation of this question as it relates to us personally. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily He took not on Him the nature of angels; but He took on Him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it believed Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself hath suffered, being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted." *Hebrews 2:14-18*. That through death, being made subject to death, taking upon Him the flesh of sin, He might, by His dying, destroy him that had the power of death.*BEST January 6, 1896, page 4.4*

"Verily He took not on Him the nature of angels; but He took on Him the seed of Abraham." The margin says, "He taketh not hold of angels, but of the seed of Abraham He taketh hold;" and one version reads, "He helps not angels." We see the reason from the next verse: "Wherefore in all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest, in things pertaining to God." "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ." *Galatians 3:16*. Now verily, He helps the seed of Abraham by Himself becoming the seed of Abraham. God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be revealed in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.*BEST January 6, 1896, page 4.5*

So you see that what the Scripture states very plainly is that Jesus Christ had exactly the same flesh that we bear,-flesh of sin, flesh in which we sin, flesh, however, in which He did not sin, but He bore *our* sins in that flesh of sin. Do not set this point aside. No matter how you may have looked at it in the past, look at it now as it is in the word; and the more you look at it in that way, the more reason you will have to thank God that it is so.*BEST January 6, 1896, page 4.6*

ADAM'S SIN TYPICAL

What was the situation?-Adam had sinned, and Adam being the head of the human family, his sin was a typical sin. God made Adam in His own image, but by sin he lost that image. Then he begat sons and daughters, but he begat them in his image, not in God's. And so we have descended in the line, but all after his image.*BEST January 6, 1896, page 4.7*

For four thousand years this went on, and then Jesus Christ came, of flesh, and in the flesh, born of a woman, made under the law; born of the Spirit, but in the flesh. And what flesh could He take but the flesh of the time? Not only that, but it was the very flesh He designed to take; because you see, the problem was to help man out of the difficulty into which he had fallen, and man is a free moral agent. He must be helped as a free moral agent. Christ's work must be, not to destroy him, not to create a new race, but to re-create man, to restore in him the image of God. "We see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that He by the grace of God should taste death for every man." *Hebrews 2:9. BEST January 6, 1896, page 4.8*

AN UNDONE, HELPLESS RACE

God made man a little lower than the angels, but man fell much lower by his sin. Now he is far separated from God; but he is to be brought back again. Jesus Christ came for that work; and in order to do it, He came, not where man was before he fell, but where man was after he fell. This is the lesson of Jacob's ladder. It rested on the earth where Jacob was, but the topmost round reached to heaven. When Christ comes to help man out of the pit, He does not come to the edge of the pit and look over, and say, Come up here, and I will help you back. If man could help himself up to the point from whence he has fallen, he could do all the rest. If he could help himself one step, he could help himself all the way; but it is because man is utterly ruined, weak, and wounded and broken to pieces, in fact, perfectly helpless, that Jesus Christ come right down where he is, and meets him there. He takes his flesh and He becomes a brother to him. Jesus Christ is a brother to us *in the flesh*: He was

born into the family.*BEST January 6, 1896, page 4.9*

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son.” He had only one Son, and He gave Him away. And to whom did He give Him? “Unto *us* a child is born,*BEST January 6, 1896, page 4.10*

UNTO US A SON IS GIVEN.”

Isaiah 9:6. Sin has made a change even in heaven; for Jesus Christ, because of sin, has taken upon Himself humanity, and to-day He wears that humanity, and will through all eternity. Jesus Christ became the Son of man as well as the Son of God. He was born into our family. He did not come as an angelic being, but was born into the family, and grew up in it; He was a child, a youth, a young man, a man in the full prime of life, in our family. He is the Son of man, related to us, bearing the flesh that we bear.*BEST January 6, 1896, page 4.11*

Adam was the representative of the family; therefore his sin was a representative sin. When Jesus Christ came, He came to take the place in which Adam had failed. “And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit.” *1 Corinthians 15:45.* The second Adam is the man Christ Jesus, and He came down to unite the human family with the divine family. God is spoken of as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named. Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God, came Himself to this part of the family, that He might win it back again, that there might be a *BEST January 6, 1896, page 4.12*

REUNITED FAMILY IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD

He came and took the flesh of sin that this family had brought upon itself by sin, and wrought out salvation for them, condemning sin in the flesh.*BEST January 6, 1896, page 4.13*

Adam failed in his place, and by the offence of one many were made sinners. Jesus Christ gave Himself, not only for us, but *to us*, uniting Himself to the family, in order that He might take the place of

the first Adam, and as head of the family win back what was lost by the first Adam. The righteousness of Jesus Christ is a representative righteousness, just as the sin of Adam was a representative sin, and Jesus Christ, as the second Adam, gathered to Himself the whole family.*BEST January 6, 1896, page 4.14*

But since the first Adam took his place, there has been a change, and humanity is sinful humanity. The power of righteousness has been lost. To redeem man from the place unto which he had fallen, Jesus Christ comes, and takes the very flesh now borne by humanity; He comes in sinful flesh, and takes the case where Adam tried it and failed. He became, not a man, but He became flesh; He became human, and gathered all humanity unto Himself, embraced it in His own infinite mind, and stood as the representative of the whole human family.*BEST January 6, 1896, page 4.15*

Adam was tempted at the very first on the question of appetite. Christ came, and after a forty days' fast the devil tempted Him to use His divine power to feed Himself. And notice, it was in sinful flesh that He was tempted, not the flesh in which Adam fell. This is wondrous truth, but I am wondrous glad that it is so. It follows at once that by birth, by being born into the same family, Jesus Christ is my brother in the flesh, "for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren." *Hebrews 2:11*. He has come into the family, identified Himself with the family, is both father of the family and brother of the family. As father of the family, He stands for the family. He came to redeem the family, condemning sin in the flesh, uniting divinity with flesh of sin. Jesus Christ made the connection between God and man, that the divine spirit might rest upon humanity. He made the way for humanity.*BEST January 6, 1896, page 4.16*

HE HATH BORNE OUR GRIEFS

And He came right near to us. He is not one step away from one of us. He "was made in the likeness of men." *Philippians 2:7*. He is now made in the likeness of man, and at the same time He holds His divinity; He is the divine Son of God. And so, by His divinity joining itself to humanity, He will restore man to the likeness of God. Jesus Christ, in taking the place of Adam, took our flesh. He took

our place completely, in order that we might take His place. He took our place with all its consequences, and that meant death, in order that we might take His place with all its consequences, and that is life eternal. "For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." 2 *Corinthians 5:21*. He was not a sinner; but He invited God to treat Him as if He were a sinner, in order that we, who were sinners, might be treated as if we were righteous. "Surely He hath borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we did esteem Him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted." *Isaiah 53:4*. The sorrows that He bore were our sorrows, and it is actually true that He did so identify Himself with our human nature as to bear in Himself all the sorrows and all the griefs of all the human family. "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and with His stripes we are healed." What was bruising to Him was healing to us, and He was bruised in order that we might be healed. "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all." *Isaiah 53:6*. And then He died because on Him was laid the iniquity of us all. There was no sin in Him, but the sins of the whole world were laid *on* Him. Behold the Lamb of God, which beareth the sins of the whole world. "And He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." 1 *John 2:2*. *BEST January 6, 1896, page 4.17*

THE PRICE PAID FOR EVERY SOUL

I want your minds to grasp the truth, that, no matter whether a man repents or not, yet Christ has borne his griefs, his sins, his sorrows, and he is invited to lay them on Christ. If every sinner in this world should repent with all his soul, and turn to Christ, the price has been paid. Jesus did not wait for us to repent before He died for us. "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." Christ has died in behalf of every single soul here; He has borne their grief and carried their sorrow; He simply asks us to lay them on Him, and let Him bear them. *BEST January 6, 1896, page 5.1*

CHRIST OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS

Furthermore; every one of us was represented in Jesus Christ when the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. We were all there in Jesus Christ. We were all represented in Adam after the flesh; and when Christ came as the second Adam, He stepped into the place of the first Adam, and thus we are all represented in Him. He invites us to step into the spiritual family. He has formed this new family, of which He is the head. He is the new man. In Him we have the union of the divine and the human.*BEST January 6, 1896, page 5.2*

In that new family, every one of us is represented. "And as I may so say, Levi also, who receiveth tithes, paid tithes in Abraham. For he was yet in the loins of his father, when Melchisedec met him." When Melchisedec went out to meet Abraham returning from the spoil, Abraham paid to him a tenth of all. Levi was still in the loins of his father Abraham; but inasmuch as he was a descendant of Abraham, what Abraham did, the Scripture says that Levi did in Abraham. Levi descended from Abraham according to the flesh. He had not been born when Abraham paid tithe; but in that Abraham paid tithe, he paid tithe also. It is exactly so in this spiritual family. What Christ did as head of this new family, we did in Him. He was our representative; He became flesh; He became we. He did not become simply a man, but He became flesh, and every one that should be born into His family was represented in Jesus Christ when He lived here in the flesh. You see, then, that all that Christ did, every one who connects himself with this family is given credit for as doing it in Christ. Christ was not a representative outside him, disconnected from him; but as Levi paid tithe in Abraham, every one who should afterwards be born into this spiritual family, did what Christ did.*BEST January 6, 1896, page 5.3*

THE NEW BIRTH

See what this means with reference to vicarious suffering. It was not that Jesus Christ came from outside, and simply stepped into our place as an outsider; but by joining Himself to us by birth, all humanity was brought together in the divine head, Jesus Christ. He suffered on the cross. Then it was the whole family in Jesus Christ that was crucified. "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead," or as the Revised Version says, "All died." *2 Corinthians 5:14*. What we want

in our experience is to enter into the fact that we did die in Him. But while it is true that Jesus Christ paid the whole price, bore every grief, was humanity itself, yet it is also true that no man receives benefit from that except he receives Christ, except he is born again. Only those who are twice born can enter into the kingdom of God. Those who are born in the flesh, must be born again, born of the Spirit, in order that what Jesus Christ did in the flesh, we may avail ourselves of, that we may really be in Him.*BEST January 6, 1896, page 5.4*

January 13, 1896

The Word Became Flesh

WWP

W. W. Prescott

The work of Christ is to bestow the character of God on us; and in the meantime God looks upon Christ and His perfect character instead of upon our sinful character. The very moment that we empty ourselves, or let Christ empty us, of self, and believe on Jesus Christ and receive Him as our personal Saviour, God looks upon Him as indeed our personal representative. Then He does not see us and all our sin; He sees Christ.*BEST January 13, 1896, page 12.1*

OUR REPRESENTATIVE IN THE COURTS OF HEAVEN

“For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” *1 Timothy 2:5*. There is a man in heaven now, the man Christ Jesus, bearing our human nature; but it is no longer a flesh of sin; it is glorified. Having come here and lived in a flesh of sin, He died; and in that He died, He died unto sin; and in that He lives, He lives unto God. When He died, He freed Himself from the flesh of sin, and He was raised glorified. Jesus Christ came here as our representative, travelled the path back to heaven in the family, died unto sin, and was raised glorified. He lived as the Son of man, grew up as the Son of man, ascended as the Son of man, and to-day, Jesus Christ, *our own* representative, *our own* brother, the *man* Christ Jesus, is in heaven, living to make intercession for us.*BEST January 13, 1896, page 12.2*

He has been through every one of our experiences. Does not He know what the cross means? He went to heaven by the way of the cross, and He says, “Come.” That is what Christ has done by becoming flesh. Our human minds stand appalled before the problem. How shall we express in human language what was done for us, when “the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us”? How shall we express what God has given to us? When He gave His

Son, He gave the most precious gift of heaven, and He gave Him never to take Him back again. To all eternity the Son of man will bear in His body the marks that sin made; forever He will be Jesus Christ, our Saviour, our Elder Brother. That is what God has done for us in giving His Son to us.*BEST January 13, 1896, page 12.3*

CHRIST IDENTIFIED WITH US

This union of the divine and the human has brought Jesus Christ very near to us. There is not one too low down for Christ to be there with him. He identified Himself completely with this human family. In the judgment, when the rewards and punishments are meted out, He says, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, My brethren, ye have done it unto Me." One version reads, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these *My little brothers*, ye have done it unto Me." Christ looks upon every one of the human family as His. When humanity suffers, He suffers. He is humanity, He has joined Himself to this family. He is our head; and when in any part of the body there is a throb of pain felt, the head feels that throb of pain. He has united Himself with us, thus uniting us with God; for we read in Matthew: "Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call His name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, *God with us.*"*BEST January 13, 1896, page 12.4*

UNITY IN CHRIST

Jesus Christ thus united Himself with the human family, that He might be *with* us by being *in* us, just as God was with Him by being in Him. The very purpose of His work was that He might be in us, and that, as He represented the Father, so the children, the Father, and the Elder Brother might be united in Him.*BEST January 13, 1896, page 12.5*

Let us see what His thought was in His last prayer: "That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us." "And the glory which Thou gavest Me, I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one; and

that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me, and hast loved them as Thou hast loved Me. Father, I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am; that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me; for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee; but I have known Thee, and these have known that Thou hast sent Me. And I have declared Thy name unto them, and will declare it." And the last words of His prayer were: "That the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and *I in them.*" *John 17:21-26.* And as He was ascending, His parting words to His disciples were, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." *Matthew 28:20.* By being in us, He is with us alway, and that this might be possible, that He might be in us, He came and took our flesh.*BEST January 13, 1896, page 12.6*

This also is the way in which the holiness of Jesus works. He had a holiness that enabled him to come and dwell in sinful flesh, and glorify sinful flesh by His presence in it; and that is what He did, so that when He was raised from the dead, He was glorified. His purpose was that having purified sinful flesh by His indwelling presence, He might now come and purify sinful flesh in us, and glorify sinful flesh in us. He "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself." *Philippians 3:21.* "For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate, to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren." *Romans 8:29.**BEST January 13, 1896, page 12.7*

THE ELECTION OF GRACE

Let me say that in this idea is bound up the whole question of predestination. There is a predestination; it is a predestination of character. There is an election; it is an election of character. Every one who believes on Jesus Christ is elected, and all the power of God is behind that election, that he shall bear the image of God. Bearing that image, he is predestinated to all eternity in Christ's kingdom; but every one who does not bear the image of God is predestinated unto death. It is a predestination of God in Christ Jesus. Christ provides the character, and offers it to any one who

will believe in Him.*BEST January 13, 1896, page 12.8*

THE HEART AND LIFE OF CHRISTIANITY

Let us enter into the experience that God has given Jesus Christ to us to dwell in our sinful flesh, to work out in our sinful flesh what He worked out when He was here. He came and lived here that we might through Him reflect the image of God. This is the very heart of Christianity. Anything contrary to it is not Christianity. "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets are gone out into the world. Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God; and every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God." *1 John 4:1-3*. Now that cannot mean simply to acknowledge that Jesus Christ was here and lived in the flesh. The devils made that acknowledgment. They knew that Christ had come in the flesh. The faith that comes by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus Christ is come in *my* flesh; He dwells in *my* flesh; I have received Him." That is the heart and life of Christianity.*BEST January 13, 1896, page 13.1*

The difficulty with the Christianity of today is that Christ does not dwell in the hearts of those professing His name. He is an outsider, one looked at from afar, as an example. But He is more than an example to us. He made known to us what God's ideal of humanity is, and then He came and lived it out before us, that we might see what it is to be in the image of God. Then He died, and ascended to His Father, sending forth His Spirit, His own representative, to live in us, that the life which He lived in the flesh we may live over again. *This is Christianity. BEST January 13, 1896, page 13.2*

CHRIST MUST DWELL IN THE HEART

It is not enough to talk of Christ and of the beauty of His character. Christianity without Christ dwelling in the heart is not genuine Christianity. He only is a genuine Christian who has Christ dwelling in his heart, and we can live the life of Christ only by having Him dwelling in us. He wants us to lay hold upon the life and power of Christianity. Do not be satisfied with anything else. Heed no one

who would lead you in any other path. “Christ in you, the hope of glory,” His power, His indwelling presence, that is Christianity. That is what we need to-day; and I am thankful that there are hearts that are longing for that experience, and who will recognise it when it comes. It does not make any difference what your name or denomination has been. Recognise Jesus Christ, and let Him dwell in you. By following where He leads, we shall know what Christian experience is, and what it is to dwell in the light of His presence. I tell you this is a wondrous truth. Human language cannot put more into human thought or language than is said in these words: “The Word became flesh, and dwelt among us.” This is our salvation.*BEST January 13, 1896, page 13.3*

The object in these remarks is not merely to establish a line of thought. It is to bring new life into our soul, and open up our ideas of the word of God and the gift of God, that we may be able to grasp His love for us. We need it. Nothing short of that will meet what we have to meet,-the world, the flesh, and the devil. But He that is for us is mightier than he that is against us. Let us have in our daily lives Jesus Christ, “the Word” that “became flesh.”*BEST January 13, 1896, page 13.4*

January 20, 1896

The Faith of Jesus, The Commandments of God, and The Patience of the Saints

WWP

W. W. Prescott

November 2, 1895 Armadale Camp-meeting Talk

“Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.” *Revelation 14:12*. *BEST January 20, 1896, page 20.1*

In our study at this time we will reverse the order, and say, Here are they that keep the faith of Jesus and the commandments of God. Here is the patience of the saints. The first experience necessary in order to keep a thing is to get it. So before we can keep the faith of Jesus we must get it. Faith is the gift of God, and no one need say that he cannot have it. “For I say through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.” *Romans 12:3*. No one need say that he cannot have faith; for God has given it to him. God gives faith, and our part is to exercise that faith, and just as in the physical frame exercise causes growth, so exercising what faith we have will cause it to grow. *BEST January 20, 1896, page 20.2*

You will observe that this is a closing message; for the next thing John saw was one “like unto the Son of man, having on His head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle.” What is seen just before the Saviour is revealed?—Those that keep the commandments of God. The commandments and teaching of men have come in to take the place of the commandments of God; but here is to be a people on the earth just before Christ comes, who will keep the commandments of God, and who will not be carried away by the traditions and teaching of men. *BEST January 20, 1896, page 20.3*

These people are also to have the faith of Jesus. In this time there is a great deal said about faith, but the subject is not worn out yet. This is to be the faith of Jesus, in contrast with the faith of the devil. Here are they that keep the commandments of God rather than the commandments of men, and have the faith of Jesus rather than the faith of the devil. What is the devil's faith? It is spoken of in *James 2:19*: "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well; the devils also believe and tremble." When Jesus was here in the flesh, the devils said to Him, "I know Thee who Thou art; the Holy One of God." The devil believes that God exists; he knows it is so, and he trembles at it; but he has not the faith of Jesus. He has the faith that assents to the truth of a certain fact. We may believe that Jesus Christ is the only begotten Son of God; we may believe that the blood of Jesus Christ is able to cleanse from all sin; we may believe that every statement made in the Bible is true; and yet not have the faith of Jesus. We may believe in the creed of the church, which says, "I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in His only Son, Jesus Christ our Lord;" we may confess to all that, and believe it as a fact, and yet not have the faith of Jesus. *BEST January 20, 1896, page 20.4*

What is the faith of Jesus as contrasted with the faith of the devil? Let us find out from the word. When Jesus came to the tomb of Lazarus, and said to him that was dead, "Lazarus, come forth," He knew that He was speaking the word of God. He was sure of that; for He spoke the words of God continually. "The word which ye hear," He said, "is not Mine, but the Father's which sent Me." *John 14:24*. He knew that the word of God had power to accomplish that which He had spoken, and that Lazarus would come forth. That is, the faith of Jesus is that faith which believes that God's word will do what it says. It simply lets God's word be true. *BEST January 20, 1896, page 20.5*

But the word of God is true whether we believe it or not. John says, "Again, a new commandment I write unto you, which thing is true in Him and in you." *1 John 2:8*. The purpose of the word of God is that it shall be true in us. The word was true in Jesus Christ, and He was the true representative of the word. What the word said, *He was*.

And if the word of God is true in us, it will make us like Christ. We have faith in the word of God when we believe that it is a living word, and that it has power to transform our characters, and to work in us that of which it speaks.*BEST January 20, 1896, page 20.6*

FAITH IN THE WORD

This is the kind of faith that Jesus commended. We read in Matthew's Gospel that "when Jesus was entered into Capernaum, there came unto Him a centurion, beseeching Him, and saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home sick of the palsy, grievously tormented. And Jesus saith unto him, I will come and heal him. The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof; but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man *under* [not having] authority, having soldiers under me; and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. When Jesus heard it, He marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel." *Matthew 8:5-10*. Here is the centurion, a commander of one hundred men in the Roman army. He says to Jesus, Speak the word; that is all you need to do.*BEST January 20, 1896, page 20.7*

We will say that the Roman authority is Caesar, that the centurion's name is Julius, and the soldier's, Alexander. Julius the man says to Alexander the man, "Go;" but Alexander the man says, "What right have you to command me to go? I shall go when I get ready." That is Julius the *man* talking to Alexander the *man* apart from any authority. But Julius the *centurion* says to Alexander the *soldier* "Go," and the soldier goes at once, because Julius is speaking as a representative of Caesar, and really, it is Caesar speaking. You see, then, the difference between the man talking to the man, and the centurion talking to the soldier. The soldier goes, because all the power of the Roman Empire is behind the word spoken by the centurion.*BEST January 20, 1896, page 20.8*

And the centurion said to Christ, I see that you, Jesus of Nazareth, are here, and that you are under authority, representing God. When you speak, it is not Jesus the son of Joseph speaking, but the Son

of God; and I know that the word you speak is the word of God, and that it has power in it. This is the kind of faith that Christ commends. The centurion had confidence that Christ was not simply the son of the carpenter, but the Son of the living God, and he believed that the whole authority of God was in the word spoken through Him.*BEST January 20, 1896, page 20.9*

“Faith cometh by hearing,” and it is no use for us to talk about faith apart from the word of God. The fact that we desire something with all our heart, is not the least evidence that it will be done. Faith is confidence in God’s word, dependence upon God’s word, letting God’s word be true. Faith is seeing Christ in His word as the power of the living God, and believing with all the heart that He will do what He says. Faith is not sentimentalism, not merely a belief that something is true; it includes submitting and yielding wholly to the word of God. See to it whether you have the faith of Jesus or the faith of the devil. He believes that the Bible is true, and believes it more fully than many who make a high profession! He knows the Bible is wholly true. He knows it is true but he does not allow it to be true in him. He is a lie; his whole life is a lie; he is a falsehood from the first to the last; and so is everyone whose character is like his, and whose faith goes no further than his. Our very characters are a lie if they are not in harmony with the word of God.*BEST January 20, 1896, page 20.10*

Before a person is converted, he has the choice of saying, “I am true; I am righteous,” and thus making God a liar, or of saying, “God only is true,” thus making himself a liar. The Scripture says, “Let God be true; but every man a liar.” *Romans 3:4*. Every unconverted person must make his choice between calling God a liar, or admitting that he is one. Sin is being false, and that is what makes the devil wholly false, because he is a sinner from the beginning; he is a liar, and the father of lies. God says, “All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.” We must let Him be true and say, “I have sinned.” But when we come to that experience in that way, there is something more to be said. When Nathan came to David to reprove him for his sin and said to him, “Thou art the man,” David answered, “I have sinned against the Lord. And Nathan said unto David, The Lord also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die.” *2 Samuel 12:13*. Let God’s word be true. When the Lord says, “You have

sinned and come short of the glory of God,” answer, “I have sinned.” When we make that confession, He says to us again, “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” To this we must say, “It is so, and let God’s word be true in us.” And so we will keep saying, “Amen,” not in word simply, but in our lives. That is faith, living, divine faith.*BEST January 20, 1896, page 20.11*

FAITH IN THE WORD BRINGS A REFORMATION

This faith brought the reformation of the sixteenth century, and it is the faith that is to work the reformation of the nineteenth century. In Luther’s time the church had covered up God’s word, and was giving the people its own teaching, just as it is doing to a large extent now. It was Luther’s work to bring the word to the people and let them feed upon it. The word of God is seen constantly in Luther’s writing. Faith in God’s word, that faith that believes God’s word regardless of any outward circumstances whatever, brought the Reformation. Our test will come on the same point. The word tells us that miracles will be wrought to sustain falsehood. The people who depend upon outward circumstances for evidence of their acceptance with God, are the very ones who are preparing themselves to be taken captive by the devil at his will. He can bring outward signs. The word says that he will make fire come down from heaven in the sight of men.*BEST January 20, 1896, page 20.12*

When the earth is removed, what shall we stand on? The word of God will be the only sure foundation, but if we do not learn how to stand steadfastly on that word, we will not be prepared to risk it in that day, and we will be of those that come before the Lord in fear. We need to become accustomed to living in the presence of God, to seeing Him who is invisible, and then, when He becomes visible, it will not frighten us in the least. This is the faith of Jesus,-the faith that believes that God’s word is true, that lets God’s word work in its power in us, and that submits entirely to that working. No man can have faith in Jesus who is not willing to give up all for Him. He gave us everything, and He takes everything.*BEST January 20, 1896, page 20.13*

Making an acrostic of “faith” may help to impress these thoughts on our minds.*BEST January 20, 1896, page 20.14*

F-Forsaking.*BEST January 20, 1896, page 20.15*

A-All.*BEST January 20, 1896, page 20.16*

I-I.*BEST January 20, 1896, page 20.17*

T-Take.*BEST January 20, 1896, page 20.18*

H-Him.*BEST January 20, 1896, page 20.19*

The faith of Jesus means, Forsaking all, I take Him, and let Him be true in me. Being a saint is simply being a true man; being a sinner is simply being a liar. Christ is the faithful and true witness; Christ is the true vine; everything about Christ is true. To be like Christ is to be true; to be different from Christ is to be false.*BEST January 20, 1896, page 20.20*

KEEPING THE COMMANDMENTS

Now let us turn to the other thought. “Here are they that keep the commandments of God.” But it is just as true with the commandments, that we must get them before we can keep them, as it is with the faith. How do we get the commandments?-In the same way that we get the faith,-God must give them to us. “For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord: I will put My laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to Me a people.” *Hebrews 8:10*. He must give us the commandments before we can keep them, and He must give them to us in His own way, by writing them in our hearts. “Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in the fleshy tables of the heart.” *2 Corinthians 3:3*. The commandments were first written with the finger of God on the tables of stone, thus foreshadowing the work of writing them on the heart by the Spirit of God. Compare two scriptures: “But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come

unto you.” “But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the kingdom of God is come upon you.” *Matthew 12:28; Luke 11:20.* One says the “finger of God,” the other the “Spirit of God.” God wrote with His own finger on the tables of stone, and He says He will write His commandments in our hearts, not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God. This was foretold when He wrote them on stone. Moreover, as He wrote them on stone, He writes them now,- with His Spirit; and His writing in our hearts is to be just as eternal as His writing on stone. He that doeth the word of God abideth forever. He that keepeth My sayings shall never die.*BEST January 20, 1896, page 21.1*

The word of God is the very life of God, and this word being in our hearts keeps us through eternity. The word of God, written with the Spirit of God on the tables of the heart, will never change. It is His character. But God never puts anything into our hearts, and He never allows the devil to put anything into our hearts to stay there, unless we consent to it. God will never write His law in our hearts unless we consent. We will suppose now that God is going on with His work of writing His law in our hearts, and He writes, “Thou shalt have no other gods before Me,” and you say, “I submit to that.” He writes again, “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the waters under the earth; thou shalt not bow down thyself to them nor serve them; for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me and keep My commandments;” and you say, “That is all right.” He writes the third commandment, and again you say, “I submit.” Then He begins to write the fourth, but you start and say, “O, no; do not write that; I cannot let that come in.” What happens?-He writes no more; and by your refusal to let Him write the fourth commandment, you rub out what He has written, and the law of God goes out of your heart. He does not write one portion of His law in our hearts contrary to our consent. We are to study the law in Jesus Christ, who kept His Father’s commandments, and then we are to submit to it, that the very life that was manifested in Jesus Christ shall be manifested in us. It is more a question of our submitting, and letting that life manifest itself, than of our manifesting it.*BEST January 20, 1896,*

January 27, 1896

The Faith of Jesus, The Commandments of God, and The Patience of the Saints

WWP

W. W. Prescott

CHRIST THE LIVING LAW

Writing the law in the heart is simply having Christ dwell in us. Christ was the living law, the law in life. Christ's Spirit is the Spirit of that divine-human life that lived in obedience to God's commandments. That is the Spirit He puts upon us, His other self dwelling in us. The law of God is ministered by the Spirit of God. When that comes into the heart, it is Christ Himself; it is "Christ in you the hope of glory." And when Christ comes into our hearts, He is the living law, the law of God worked out in character. Christ dwelling in our hearts, means bringing the character of God into our lives. Keeping the commandments of God is manifesting the character of Jesus Christ. *BEST January 27, 1896, page 28.1*

Now a word as to obeying the commandments of God. Keeping the commandments of God is obeying the commandments, but there is an infinite amount of *attempting* to obey the commandments that is not *keeping* them. But righteousness does not come by the law. Some people hang the law upon the wall, read it over, and then try to do what it says. They have a terribly hard time, and then do not do it. Why?-because they put it up there. That is not where God puts it. He says He will put it in your heart, and you are to keep it there. "Out of the heart are the issues of life." Do you suppose that out of a heart where the law of God is written, can come murders? God has told us what is in the natural heart. He say, "For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness." *Mark 7:21, 22*. That is what God sees in the natural heart, but does man see all that? "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." Man says, I am no murderer; I am a very

moral man. I go to church regularly, nothing of the kind is in my heart. But those very things are there. Unless Christ is there and has cast them out, they have come in and defiled the temple of the soul.*BEST January 27, 1896, page 28.2*

But when Christ, who is the living law comes in, the law is written on the tables of the heart. And when Christ comes in, all the evils of the natural heart are cast out by His holy presence. When we submit to Him, He writes His law in our hearts and lives. Religion cannot be communicated as a theory. Religion is life. When Christ writes His law in our hearts, it is by writing it in our lives, and when this is done, murder and deceit are cast out! That is writing the law in the heart; that is putting the very life of Christ as our life, so that our life manifests His life.*BEST January 27, 1896, page 28.3*

It is a terrible mistake to think that keeping the commandments of God means to take the law, look at it, and then make up our minds that we will do it. That means only failure and discouragement. It is when we see that Christ is the law of God which we are to receive, and when we receive Him, that the law is written in our hearts, and our lives are brought into harmony with that law. The law of the Lord is holy, just, and good. We cannot make our lives holy, but Christ can do it for us. Oh, that we might see in its true light the privilege of being in harmony with God's law. It is the privilege of being like Christ, the privilege of leading a true life, the privilege of communing with God, who created all things through Jesus Christ. It is the great privilege of humanity to be in harmony with God's law.*BEST January 27, 1896, page 28.4*

OBJECT OF CHRIST'S LIFE ON EARTH

The whole work of Christ was to show the perfection of God's law, and to make it possible for us to be in harmony with it. And when we have Christ's life and teaching to show us what the law of God is, it is perfectly amazing that so many will allow the devil to cheat them out of the privilege of being in harmony with that law. To be like Christ, to be like God, to lead a true life, to be exalted, to be brought into communion with God,-this is indeed a privilege. There are those that say, but if I live in harmony with the law of God, I will lose my situation, and what will my family do? But there is nothing

that can happen to those who are in harmony with the law of God, except what God permits. If He takes away one thing, it is to give a better thing in its place. It may not mean more money, but what of that? Does not God care for His own? "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." *Matthew 6:33*. That is what God says. Let God be true, and every man a liar. Faith makes God's word true, and believes what He says, and sees nothing except the word of God.*BEST January 27, 1896, page 28.5*

GOD CARES FOR THOSE WHO ARE TRUE TO HIM

God is caring for His people in these times. There is abundant proof that those who observe the seventh day, even in these hard times, are better situated financially than the average people. God will care for everyone who is true to Him. He spread a table in the wilderness to show us that, if necessary, He can bring bread from heaven and water from the rock. Trust God to do it. The time is right upon us when we shall need to trust Jesus Christ and His word to keep us in food and clothing, to keep us temporally and spiritually, and those only will be safe who are hidden in Jesus Christ. That is literally coming to pass, and those who do not trust in Jesus Christ will perish. God is warning us, trying to win people away from the destruction that is to come. Submission to Him in all things is our only safety now. "Here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus."*BEST January 27, 1896, page 28.6*

THE LAW KEPT IN CHRIST

Although we cannot keep the commandments till we get them, that does not mean that the precepts of the law will not be lived out in our lives. That is just what will be done. No man can do it of himself; but we are to *receive* the law of God in Jesus Christ and to *obey* the law of God in Jesus Christ. Then it is that God dwells with us, and the law is written in our hearts.*BEST January 27, 1896, page 28.7*

"Here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." It is because they keep the faith of Jesus that they keep the commandments. "Thy word have I hid in mine heart," said the

psalmist, “that I might not sin against Thee.” And “sin is the transgression of the law.” Jesus Christ is the Alpha and Omega, the A to Z; and when we hide Him in the heart, we hide the Word of God in the heart; and what we keep as a living law turns about and keeps us.*BEST January 27, 1896, page 28.8*

“Behold, I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.” We are living just before the second coming of Christ. Through the faith of Jesus Christ, let God’s word be true in our character. God wants us to keep His commandments because they are what will keep us. Christ said, “I know that His commandment is life everlasting,” and that is why He could say, “If a man keep My saying, He shall never see death.” *John 12:50; 8:51*. The work of Christ has changed into a sleep the death that came as the result of Adam’s transgression. “If a man keep My saying he shall never see death;” for he has within him the living Word. “He that doeth the word of God abideth forever.” He may fall asleep, but he will never see death. But those who do not keep God’s commandments will see death from which there is no wakening.*BEST January 27, 1896, page 28.9*

THE PATIENCE OF THE SAINTS

“Here is the patience of the saints.” “For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise.” *Hebrews 10:36*. We have need of patience. “For yet a little while, and He that shall come, will come, and will not tarry.” Those that have been keeping His commandments and waiting for Him, have need of endurance, for there is yet a little while.*BEST January 27, 1896, page 28.10*

“The just shall live by faith.” There are three places in the New Testament where this scripture is used, and the emphasis used in each case is different. “For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, the *just* shall live by faith” *Romans 1:17*. There the emphasis is placed on being righteous.*BEST January 27, 1896, page 28.11*

“But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God it is evident; for, the just shall live by *faith*.” *Galatians 3:11*. There faith is

emphasised.*BEST January 27, 1896, page 28.12*

“Now the just shall *live* by faith; but if any man draw back, My soul shall have no pleasure in him.” *Hebrews 10:38*. Here living is the leading thought. The keeping of the commandments has been going on, yet here is a time when Christ seems to delay. If we live by faith, we shall live through all the destruction about us. “A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee.” “The just *shall live* by faith.” “Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked.” That is the promise of God to us, but He also says, “Ye have need of patience.” “Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord; that the Lord is very pitiful, and of tender mercy.” Job endured, although he could not see the reason for it. But in that trial of Job God was working out before the universe the fact that His love can keep a man when all temporal blessings are taken away.*BEST January 27, 1896, page 28.13*

In the *18th chapter* of Luke we have the case of the widow and the unjust judge recorded as instruction for us, with reference to the delay of the coming of the Lord. This is the time above all others, just before the coming of the Lord, when we are not to faint. “And he spake a parable unto them, to this end, that men ought always to pray and not to faint; saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man. And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary [or opponent]. And he would not for a while; but afterward he said within himself, Though I fear not God nor regard man, yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me.” To get rid of her he would vindicate her of her opponent at law. “And shall not God avenge His own elect, which cry day and night unto Him, though He bear long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily.”*BEST January 27, 1896, page 29.1*

DISTRESSING TIMES AHEAD

We are in the time of trouble foretold in God’s word. These distressing times we see about us are but the beginning of these things. “This know also, that in the last days perilous [or hard] times

shall come.” 2 *Timothy* 3:1. Are we not seeing hard times, hard times financially and spiritually? And these times on which we have entered, though there may be times when they will brighten, will grow worse and worse. The slight revival financially in these colonies is not permanent. God has sent out His message to prepare a people for His coming, to gather out a people who will understand these things. Men’s hearts are already failing them for fear; they are saying, What do these things mean? “But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.” We shall see violence and murder. That is the devil’s work. We shall see in this world a situation such as the human mind has never conceived of; we shall see a situation that will strike terror into every heart that does not know Jesus Christ and the power of His salvation. We can see it coming.*BEST January 27, 1896, page 29.2*

In that day God’s people cry unto Him for deliverance; but He seems to put off the day of delivering them, because we shall have come to that time when the deliverance of God’s people means the death of their adversaries. The deliverance of God’s people from their foes can only be followed by the coming of the Lord Jesus and the destruction of their enemies. God is so slow to pour out His wrath upon those who have rejected Him, that He seems almost to have deserted His people. But God will “avenge His own elect, which cry day and night unto Him, though He bear long with them.”*BEST January 27, 1896, page 29.3*

“But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified; for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not by and by. Then said He unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; and great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven. But before all these they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and into prison, being brought before kings and rulers for My name’s sake.” *Luke* 21:9-12. Notice what they are brought up for. Because a man is hated, it does not follow that he is a Christian. He must be hated for “My name’s sake.” Because the world does not like a man, it does not follow that he is a Christian. It must dislike him for the same reason that it disliked Christ. Those that are Christians will be reviled because they are in harmony with

Christ's life and character. "And it shall turn to you for a testimony. Settle it, therefore, in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer; for I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist. And ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men *for My name's sake*. But there shall not an hair of your head perish. In your patience possess ye your souls."

Verses 13-19. In your endurance acquire your lives. We are living just before the coming of the Lord. "For yet a little while, and He that shall come, will come, and will not tarry." It is in our endurance that we acquire our lives. Before the coming of the Lord, there will be a people who will be fulfilling His will. Our place is to be one of them. Our place is to be one of those of whom the Lord can say, "Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." *BEST January 27, 1896, page 29.4*

February 3, 1896

Christ Our Example

WWP

W. W. Prescott

November 9, 1895 Armadale Camp-meeting Talk

“Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.” *Matthew 11:28-30.BEST February 3, 1896, page 36.1*

I wish especially to call attention to these words: “Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me.” Everybody knows that Christ is our example in the Christian life. It would be useless for me to take your time or mine to set forth that fact. There are a great many who desire to imitate the example of Christ, a great many who do not know how, and the purpose of our study this afternoon will be, if possible, to help some one to know how to do this. I take it for granted that every Christian knows that he ought to be like Christ. There is no teaching of the Scripture more plain than this, and the promise is, that while the disciple is not above his teacher, yet every one who is perfected, will be as his teacher. Our purpose is to bring out some simple and plain lessons which, we hope, will be helpful to you in understanding better how to imitate the life of Christ.*BEST February 3, 1896, page 36.2*

THREE DEFINITE POINTS

We might wander over a great deal of ground in this matter, and occupy our whole time, without getting anything very definite in our minds. But I want to get two or three lessons fixed; for they are the foundation of every other lesson, and with them all the other lessons come of themselves. To make the point definite in our minds with reference to learning of Him, I want to set before you three points.*BEST February 3, 1896, page 36.3*

We are to imitate the example of Christ in living *in God* and *with God* and *for God*. How shall we live, as did Christ in God, with God, and for God?*BEST February 3, 1896, page 36.4*

CHRIST THE BRANCH

Christ was the very revelation of God, the life of God in the earth. In *Zechariah 6:12* the prophet says of Him: "Behold the man whose name is the Branch; and He shall grow up out of His place [not in the wrong place, but where He is; He will grow up out of His place], and He shall build the temple of the Lord." Christ is here spoken of as the branch, and He was the branch of God. But His root was in heaven; and in being the branch of God to this world, He is, in another sense, the arm of God. God was in heaven, but He was reaching down in Jesus Christ to get hold of the world. As *the branch*, Christ grew as the branch, in order to be something visible to the world. God is in clouds and darkness; but He wanted to reveal Himself to a world that had been cut off by sin, so Christ came as a branch of Himself.*BEST February 3, 1896, page 36.5*

THE HIDDEN SOURCE OF LIFE

You know that the roots of a tree are hidden underneath; but they are the secret sources of life, and that which appears, which we call the tree, is after all but the root which comes up in sight. Christ was the branch to the world, but His root was hidden in God, and He was made manifest that the world might see what God is. Christ's life, when He was here in the flesh, was in God, and He depended on God just as much for life for His service here as we are obliged to depend upon God. To be sure, He had life; "for as the Father hath life in Himself, so hath He given to the Son to have life in Himself." But when He came here to be the revelation of God to the world, and an example to humanity, He put Himself in the very place of humanity; and as humanity was weak, He became weak for humanity's sake. As humanity was dependent wholly upon a power outside of itself, so He became dependent. And He said, "As the living Father hath sent Me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth Me, even he shall live by Me."*BEST February 3, 1896, page 36.6*

He took that place of dependence, that position of weakness, in order that He might pass through the experience of those whom He came to save; His life was hid in God, and He depended wholly upon God and upon the ministry of angels.*BEST February 3, 1896, page 36.7*

CHRIST'S LIFE IN GOD

Do not think that the life of Christ here was a life of ease because He was the divine Son of God. He was the divine Son of God, but He veiled that divinity. Behold the wondrous condescension of God in Christ. Although He had power, yet He laid it down, and became dependent. This is stated in Scriptures. The Gospel of John is the great gospel of life. We turn to it when we want to learn about life. In this Gospel Christ says, "If I do not the works of My Father, believe Me not. But if I do, though ye believe not Me, believe the works; that ye may know, and believe, that the Father is in Me, and I in Him."*BEST February 3, 1896, page 36.8*

While it is true that Jesus Christ was divinity veiled in humanity, it is also true that He was humanity enshrined in divinity. In His humanity He hung Himself upon His Father for help, for strength, for all that He needed as humanity; in His divinity, the Father dwelt in Him, and worked through Him. He was divinity in humanity, the roots reaching to heaven, but He was humanity enshrined in divinity. So He says in *John 14:10*: "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? the words that I speak unto you, I speak not of Myself; but the Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works." And He asked for His disciples, "That they all may be one; as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee."*John 17:21*. Christ was that union of the divine and the human, which is the perfection of humanity, because of divinity working in and through humanity.*BEST February 3, 1896, page 36.9*

"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him."*John 1:18*. Notice the statement. It does not say, "who came from the bosom of the Father," but "which is in the bosom of the Father." There was such a union between Christ and His Father that where Christ was, there the Father was. And He was in the bosom of the Father while

here upon earth, His life hid in God for our sakes.*BEST February 3, 1896, page 36.10*

Now we will notice*BEST February 3, 1896, page 36.11*

CHRIST'S LIFE WITH GOD;

that is to say, His communion with God, His fellowship with God. While His life was with God, it must also flow out through humanity, and Christ, by putting Himself in the position of humanity, puts Himself in the place of the empty vine, that must be filled from the Father. He puts Himself in that position where, by His communion with God, He received from God what He gave to the world. In His last prayer He said, "For I have given unto them the words which Thou gavest Me;" "and the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them." *John 17:8, 22.BEST February 3, 1896, page 36.12*

He stood between God and man, to receive from God on His divine side, to hand out on His human side, and to make a complete connection between the divine and the human. But in putting Himself there, He subjected Himself to the same conditions that we find in us. He had nothing in Himself, He emptied Himself, and became a channel of blessing and light and power and life and glory to man. What He brought to the world, He brought because the Father gave it to Him, and He must needs go to the Father to get what the Father would have Him give to the world, because of His dependence.*BEST February 3, 1896, page 36.13*

CHRIST'S SOURCE OF STRENGTH

So we find Christ going often to the Father for communion, seeking from Him strength. Let us read two or three scriptures that will emphasise this. "In the morning rising up a great while before day, He went out, and departed into a solitary place, and there prayed." *Mark 1:35* Why?-Because He had a day before Him of revealing the Father, a day before Him of giving God to the people, and He must needs rise a great while before day, and go to the Father, and in fellowship with Him, in communion with Him, He must receive from Him what He was to give to the people.*BEST February 3, 1896, page 36.14*

“Now when all the people were baptised, it came to pass that Jesus also being baptised, and praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon Him, and a voice came from heaven which said, Thou art My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” *Luke 3:21, 22*. The heavens were opened to Christ when He prayed; the heavens will be opened to us when we pray.*BEST February 3, 1896, page 36.15*

“And it came to pass about an eight days after these sayings, He took Peter and John and James, and*BEST February 3, 1896, page 36.16*

WENT UP INTO A MOUNTAIN TO PRAY

And as He prayed, the fashion of His countenance was altered, and His raiment was white and glistering.” *Luke 9:28, 29*. But let me tell you He prayed more than a short prayer that night. Christ prayed His short prayers in public; but when He went to commune with God in the night season, then it was that He poured out His soul before God, reaching out in His weakness, and clinging to God, not simply for Himself, but for all the people, for our sakes, that He might grasp divine power; and it was while He was praying that the fashion of His countenance was altered.*BEST February 3, 1896, page 36.17*

It was when Moses was in the presence of God that his face shone with glory, so that when he came out the people could not stand before him. It was when Christ, as our representative, prayed that night on the mountain till His disciples fell asleep and the dews of night fell on Him, that the heavens were opened to Him. It is in our communion with God that glory rests upon us, and our filthy garments are changed to the white robes of Christ's righteousness.*BEST February 3, 1896, page 36.18*

CHRIST'S LIFE FOR GOD

And so it was in answer to His communion with the Father that He received from God the blessings He gave to humanity; but now, having a life *in* God, maintained by fellowship *with* God, that life of power is to be spent *for* God. Christ's life was a life of sacrifice, a life of service for God; He was a representative of God as well as

the representative of humanity. He was sent here to represent the divine character, but also to show that it is possible for that divine character to be revealed in humanity.*BEST February 3, 1896, page 36.19*

Do not think that God is some far-away being. The life and experience of Christ were to show to the world that God can dwell in humanity; that God has made humanity as a temple for His own indwelling, and Christ received the very presence of the Father to dwell in His humanity, to show that humanity can be a temple for the living God.*BEST February 3, 1896, page 36.20*

Christ spent His life wholly in service for God. All the strength received from the Father in His hours of prayer went out in ministry. He fed the people, taught them, laboured for them, and He became weary as He walked up and down Judea, giving His life for the people. And He ended it by giving His life on the cross for them. That is the life of Christ, in God, with God, and for God.*BEST February 3, 1896, page 36.21*

CHRIST'S LIFE TO BE REPEATED IN US

I delight to dwell upon that picture, and to have it presented before our minds; but I want to tell you that the only reason that picture is recorded on the page of history is because it is God's intention that the same experience shall be lived over again in us. It is God's purpose that we shall be like Christ, and He has made provision that we shall be. I know we are weak, I know we are helpless, I know we are unworthy; but I know that God has made wondrous provision. God knew that we were unworthy; but He made the provision that through just such humanity as there is here to-day, if they will have faith in Christ, He will reveal His character, and make them channels of blessing to the world. That is God's design for us, and let us rejoice in the thought; let us take our eyes off the cheap, common things, and low grades of Christian experience, and look up to the throne of God and of Christ, our Advocate, who is there to intercede for us. Let us believe that God intends a wonderful experience for us in His Son. His plan is to do it, and His grace is sufficient.*BEST February 3, 1896, page 36.22*

Our lives, just like Christ's are to be in God, with God, for God. "Ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God." That experience is for us, and we are to realise every day that we have no life in ourselves; that we have no power in ourselves; but that all our life and power must come from Christ. Our life, like Christ's, must be between the mountain and the multitude, going up into the mountain with God get what He has for us, that we may bring it down to give to the people.*BEST February 3, 1896, page 37.1*

When Christ fed the thousands by His miracles, He Himself did not give the bread to the people; but He blessed it and brake it, and gave it to His disciples, and they gave it to the people. We are to go to Him, and He will bless the loaf, and give it to us; and then, as a loaf blessed of Him, and having in it life and salvation, we are to bring it to the people. And so we must continue*BEST February 3, 1896, page 37.2*

OUR LIFE OF FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD

And this life of fellowship must be, in every detail, like Christ's. We must be born in the Spirit as was He born in the Spirit; we must be baptised of the Holy Spirit as was He. When we go to temptation, we must go as He did, led of the Spirit; when we return from victory over temptation, we must return as He did, in the power of the Spirit. When we preach we must say as He did—"The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent Me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised." *Luke 4:18*. He was baptised of the Holy Spirit, and "went about doing good." He would even go out of His way to give somebody the opportunity of receiving benefit from Him. His was a life of service and self-sacrifice, and He calls upon us to follow His example, not in our own strength, but with a life in God, rooted in heaven. He bids us come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.*BEST February 3, 1896, page 37.3*

LEARNING BY SERVICE

Our life, being a life with God in the power of the Spirit, must also be a life for God. We are kept many times from the fulness of this experience by being afraid of God. We are afraid that if we unreservedly and fully give ourselves up to God and say, "Whether I live or die, whether in sickness or health, all my life shall be for God," that God will call us to something that we do not want; and it is that very fear that keeps God from revealing Himself to us and in us. God does not reveal Himself by telling about Himself; but He says, "Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me." By service learn.*BEST February 3, 1896, page 37.4*

We do not enter the school of Christ to have Him tell us the theory of the Christian life simply as something to be studied out ourselves. God gives us knowledge of Himself by revealing Himself *in* us, and when He wants us to know the experience of faith and the victory of faith, He leads us up to a Red Sea, that He may teach us what this victory means. It is by living with God that we learn God. Our heads may be filled with a great many theories; but they will all be useless unless we know what God is by seeing what He does for us, by seeing what He can do for those that believe in Him, by being in Him, and letting Him work.*BEST February 3, 1896, page 37.5*

We have a great many lessons to learn about God, and the fundamental lesson is, "Walk in the light." Everything depends upon light. Take it away and the flowers will die. They must live in the light. Take away the light of God from us, and our Christian experience perishes, but the light goes on. It is not stationary; it moves, and we must move with it in order to keep the light we have, and open the channel for more light.*BEST February 3, 1896, page 37.6*

February 10, 1896

Christ Our Example

WWP

W. W. Prescott

Let us notice now our life for God.*BEST February 10, 1896, page 43.1*

DENYING SELF

In *Matthew 16:24* we read, "Then said Jesus unto His disciples, If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me." "Let him deny himself." Those words have a much broader meaning than staying away from some place of amusement, or giving up eating something that pleases the palate. They mean the sacrifice of self, the disinheriting of self, the emptying out of self, the very denial of self. Peter denied Christ when he said, "I know Him not," and we are to treat self in exactly the same way. Does self rise up and claim recognition? then say, "I know you not." Just as distinctly as Peter three times denied his Lord, so we, when self rises up and wants to control us, are to say, "I do not know you; I will have nothing to do with you." Deny self, disinherit self, let self die, and keep it dead, too.*BEST February 10, 1896, page 43.2*

Said Paul, "I protest by your rejoicing, which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily." *1 Corinthians 15:31*. Many people are troubled in their Christian experience because self is continually rising. "Why," they say, "I thought yesterday that I had gained a complete victory, and that self was crucified." Self was crucified just as long as the faith that cast self out kept it out, but just the moment that that faith wavers, self rises up and asserts its power. The faith which puts self to death must keep it dead. Self must be crucified daily and hourly through faith in Jesus Christ.*BEST February 10, 1896, page 44.1*

"Then said Jesus unto His disciples, If any man will come after Me,

let him deny himself, and take up his cross and follow Me.” I would like to impress upon your minds to-day what is included in the cross of Christ. Let us spell it.*BEST February 10, 1896, page 44.2*

C.-Crucifixion.- The very first letter and the very first lesson of the cross. Said Paul in his letter to the Galatians, “I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.” *Galatians 2:20*. He said again in this same letter, “God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Chris, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.” *Galatians 6:14*. Taking up the cross means the death of self; bearing the cross means dying daily, self-death, keeping self dead. That is crucifixion, the very first letter of the cross, but I want to tell you that there is another letter.*BEST February 10, 1896, page 44.3*

R.-Resurrection.- After crucifixion there is a rising again. “For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection.” *Romans 6:5*. I like the Revised Version of this verse, which reads, “For if we have been united with the likeness of His crucifixion, we shall be also with the likeness of His resurrection.” (margin.) If you spell C, you can spell R. For “like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” Christ lived this life on the earth for our sakes; He was crucified for our offences, but He was raised again for our justification. We do not need to mourn; for He who made heaven and earth is our Saviour, and He lives to-day for us. He said when He was here, “All power upon heaven and earth is given unto Me.” He gained this power by His death, and when He was raised up, He was raised up to newness of life. “In that He died, He died unto sin once, but in that He lives, He lives unto God. Likewise reckon ye yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” And the new life to which we are raised is not the old life of self, but it is the life of Jesus Christ,-that divine-human life, which is not simply the life of God apart from flesh, nor the life of flesh apart from God, but the life of God which has been wrought into human flesh. That life comes to us in our resurrection from the crucifixion of self. Where self dies Christ lives; where the old man is buried, the

new man is raised to life; where the old man lived in sin, the new man walks with God. It is the resurrection life in the power of Christ's resurrection.*BEST February 10, 1896, page 44.4*

Said Paul in his letter to the Philippians, I count everything that I ever thought was worth anything, as loss, "for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus Christ my Lord." As less than nothing I hold the experiences of the past, "that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection." It is the resurrection power that we Christians need; it is the resurrection life that we must have; and I thank God that it is the resurrection life that is provided. Do not be satisfied with anything short of that. It is God's free gift in Jesus Christ. I would that I could arouse everyone that has the least spark of faith in Jesus Christ, to lay hold largely upon His power. There is no danger of our exhausting the supply; infinite are His resources; infinite His love; infinite His desire for us. He is only waiting for us to grasp it by faith. I thank God that it is so.*BEST February 10, 1896, page 44.5*

O.-Obedience.- That goes with the cross. To everyone who thinks that he cannot obey God's law, I would say, Obey the gospel. If you are afraid of the law, obey the gospel, that is enough. What happens to those who do not obey the gospel?-"And to you who are troubled, rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that *obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.*" *2 Thessalonians 1:7-9*. Friends, obey the gospel, and I will risk the law. Obey the gospel, because we have found in the plainest possible manner that the gospel is simply the *law in Christ*.*BEST February 10, 1896, page 44.6*

Read *2 Corinthians 10:5*, and it will show us to what extent this obedience is to go. "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." He who does not obey the gospel in thought, does not obey the gospel at all. He who does not obey the truth in thought, does not obey the truth at all. No outward life can satisfy; it must be the inmost life of the soul; and the outward life, after all, will be but the revealing of what is within. "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." And the glory of every pure thought and holy deed we

are to give to Him who loved us and gave Himself for us. Obedience stands right in the centre of the cross.*BEST February 10, 1896, page 44.7*

S.-Sacrifice.- That sacrifice which offers up self,-self-sacrifice: the complete yielding of everything to God, the entire consecration which lays everything upon God's altar, and cares not for the opinion of men, but looks to God for His opinion; which cares not for the words of men, but looks to God in Jesus Christ for His word; which lives the life He lived in the flesh, by the faith of the Son of God, who loved us and gave Himself for us.*BEST February 10, 1896, page 44.8*

S.-Service.- A life given up to God, devoted wholly to God. Christ's mission here was to save the lost, and it is the mission of every representative of His to do the same work. Let me tell you, my friends, in the fear of God, that we will not stand clear in His sight if we have not laboured for Him. Selfishness has no place in heaven. And unless we get rid of self, we can never go to heaven. Jesus Christ is the only One who can take us there; self will drag us down to hell. Let Jesus Christ lift us up. Let us consecrate our lives and all we have to the service of God. It is all His anyway. How much I ask you, is it to give to God what belongs to Him already? Anything short of this sacrifice is robbing God. We are His by creation and by redemption. In the mouth of two witnesses shall it be established that we are His. Then act as though we were His, and let Him act as though we were His.*BEST February 10, 1896, page 44.9*

The very purpose of the life of Christ in heaven now is that the image of God may appear in our lives. Christ lived His life here in the flesh to show us what the image of God is; but He is not satisfied with that. He wants us to co-operate with Him in letting that life be lived again in us. Christ told His disciples just before ascending that He would send His Holy Spirit to dwell in them. God's purpose, and I would that this thought might be burned in our minds, is that the very life that Christ lived shall be lived by His followers. And we live that life by our submission and willingness to give up our own way and let God be glorified in Jesus Christ.*BEST February 10, 1896, page 44.10*

That is Christian life. I would that I could impress upon every Christian what it is his privilege to be. If you have not known it, take hold of Jesus Christ. God is able to do great things for us. He has promised to do great things for us, and His promises never fail; they are to-day yea and amen in Jesus Christ. What God wants us to do is to have faith in them, and treat Him as our loving Father, who has given us all things in Jesus Christ.*BEST February 10, 1896, page 44.11*

Now we have the cross,-Crucifixion, resurrection, obedience, sacrifice, service. It begins with the death of self; it rises into a new life, even the life of Christ; it shows itself in implicit obedience to God in Jesus Christ; it gives itself a sacrifice to others; for says the Scripture, "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." *1 John 3:16*. "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many." "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it." *Matthew 10:25*. He who holds on to self will perish with self; he who lets go of self will live in Jesus Christ, and will find a life that measures with the life of God.*BEST February 10, 1896, page 44.12*

GIVING UP SELF ONLY A QUESTION OF TIME

It is only a question with us of when we are going to give up this life. You are, I know, very well aware that the days of our life are but "threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off, and we fly away." *Psalms 90:10*. Shall we give up this life now and receive the life of Christ, or shall we hold to this life until it is taken away from us, and it is too late to receive the life of Christ? We are to meet God face to face. Shall we meet Him in Christ or in self? We are to meet the law of God. Shall we meet that law in Jesus Christ or in ourselves? These experiences must come to everyone. The question for us to settle is, Shall they come to us in Christ or out of Christ? Our safety, our glory, our joy, is in meeting these experiences in Jesus Christ.*BEST February 10, 1896, page 44.13*

I want now to call your attention to the experience of the apostle Paul as a disciple, in the school of Christ. Before his conversion Paul was a disciple in the school of Gamaliel. I do not know what the customs of the Jewish schools were in that time, or whether they conferred any degrees on Paul, but I know that he was a learned man, and I suppose he had gathered up the wisdom of the day as it could be learned in the Jewish schools. Speaking of himself in his letter to the Philippians, he says, "For we are the circumcision which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more. Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless." And he speaks of this again to the Galatians: "For ye have heard of my conversation in time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it: and profited in the Jews' religion above many mine equals in mine own nation, being more exceedingly zealous of the traditions of my fathers." *Philippians 3:3-6; Galatians 1:13, 14*. That is where Paul stood when he entered the school of Christ. I want to follow his experience in the school of Christ, and see the degrees that he took. *BEST February 10, 1896, page 44.14*

The first degree is—*BEST February 10, 1896, page 45.1*

B. A. —Born again. *BEST February 10, 1896, page 45.2*

That is the first degree everyone takes in the school of Christ. Writing to the Corinthians Paul says, "And last of all He was seen of me also, as one born out of due time." *1 Corinthians 15:8*. Christ said, "Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." *John 3:7*. But right in connection with that "must" is another. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up. "Ye must be born again," "the Son of man must be lifted up", and in Him is the life for the new birth. The first degree then is Born again. *BEST February 10, 1896, page 45.3*

The next degree that Paul took was—*BEST February 10, 1896, page 45.4*

M. A. —Moulded afresh.*BEST February 10, 1896, page 45.5*

Made over completely by the new life. Paul writes of this in *Colossians 3:9, 10*, “Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; and have put on the new man which is renewed in knowledge, after the image of Him that created Him.” The first degree, Born again, is conferred upon us in order that the new life dwelling in us may mould and fashion us after the image of God.*BEST February 10, 1896, page 45.6*

The next degree is—*BEST February 10, 1896, page 45.7*

D. D. —Delivered Debtor.*BEST February 10, 1896, page 45.8*

After one has received the new birth, moulding him into the new life, to what then is he debtor? Said Paul, “I am a debtor both to the Greeks and to the Barbarians; both to the wise and to the unwise. So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.” *Romans 1:14, 15*. He had been delivered, and he felt himself a debtor to give to others what he had received. He took this degree and deserved it. His life was a manifestation that he was indeed a D. D. in Christ, a delivered debtor, who gave his life to give to others what God had given him.*BEST February 10, 1896, page 45.9*

I think Paul took the next degree also, that of—*BEST February 10, 1896, page 45.10*

LL. D. —Life Lovingly Dedicated*BEST February 10, 1896, page 45.11*

These are the genuine degrees in God’s school, Born Again, Moulded Afresh, Delivered Debtor, a Life Lovingly Dedicated. What is this but life in God, life with God, and life for God? That was Paul’s experience, and God has set forth that experience for us, because it belongs to every child of God.*BEST February 10, 1896, page 45.12*

We might continue this lesson at great length, but I want these thoughts to abide in your minds. They are a great deal better to talk about and to think about than the cheap, common things of life. Let our minds be filled with the things of God, with the word of God, and then expect God to tell us great things about His word, and to reveal to us the deep things of God. And let us look for these degrees in our lives. No university founded by man can confer these degrees upon anyone, but in the school of Christ they are open to everyone. If anyone wants to carry about with him degrees that are worth something, let him enter the school of Christ, and take the degrees given there.*BEST February 10, 1896, page 45.13*

If you will carry away with you these thoughts to-day, that God in Jesus Christ lived a life of perfection on earth, and that Jesus Christ now lives in heaven, our great high Priest, making intercession for us, receiving from the Father the promise of His Spirit that He may give it to us, in order that the very same character that appeared in the character of Jesus Christ to the glory of God may appear in you, and if you will believe in God to work that in you by crucifixion, by obedience, by self-sacrifice, by service, God will greatly bless your lives in Jesus Christ.*BEST February 10, 1896, page 45.14*

February 17, 1896

The Kingdom of God; or The Great Controversy Between Good and Evil

WWP

W. W. Prescott

October 23, 1895 Armadale Camp-meeting Talk

“Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it in heaven.”
Matthew 6:10.BEST February 17, 1896, page 52.1

It may help us to understand more clearly our own relation to God, and what the service of God means-what religion really is-if we study the fact that the cross of Jesus Christ has to do with more than this earth. We take altogether too limited a view of God’s plan of salvation if we confine its working simply to this world of ours.*BEST February 17, 1896, page 52.2*

In this petition the contrast is drawn between heaven and earth, and the prayer is that the will of God may be done on earth as it is done in heaven. The fact that God’s will reigns supreme there, makes heaven what it is; and because God’s will is not done here, makes this world what it is.*BEST February 17, 1896, page 52.3*

THE UNIVERSE INTERESTED IN THE PLAN OF SALVATION

Let us first notice two or three scriptures which will call our attention to the thought that heaven has been affected, and is still affected, by God’s plan of salvation. Sin has affected more than this world, and more than this world depends upon God’s plan of salvation. In his epistle to the Ephesians, Paul says, “Having made known unto us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself: That in the dispensation of the fulness of times, He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth; even in Him.” *Ephesians 1:9, 10*. “For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell; and, having made peace through the blood of His cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, I say,

whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.” *Colossians 1:19, 20.BEST February 17, 1896, page 52.4*

It may seem at first thought somewhat strange that there should be anything in heaven needing to be reconciled by the blood of His cross, but so it says. God’s plan of salvation extends further than reconciling those that are on the earth. There is something to be reconciled that has to do with things in heaven.*BEST February 17, 1896, page 52.5*

REBELLION IN HEAVEN

In the Revelation John says, “And there was war in heaven.” We are accustomed to the idea that this earth only has been in a state of rebellion; but this scripture says that there was war in heaven. “Michael and His angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation and strength, and the kingdom of our God and the power of His Christ; for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.”*BEST February 17, 1896, page 52.6*

“Michael and His angels fought.” Michael is Christ. Three very simple scriptures will show us that. “Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil, He disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.” *Jude 9*. There we find that Michael is spoken of as the archangel. And in Thessalonians Paul says, “For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel.” *1 Thessalonians 4:16*. The Lord Himself shall descend with the voice of the archangel. But we read in *John 5:25*, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God,... and shall come forth.” Michael is the archangel; the Lord will descend with the voice of the archangel; and it is the Lord’s voice that calls the dead from their tombs.*BEST February 17, 1896, page 52.7*

“And the dragon was cast out, that old serpent.” Not in the sense that we use the expression-that old serpent himself-but that ancient serpent, that one that caused the trouble in Eden. There was war in heaven, and the old serpent, the one that caused trouble in Eden, and is still causing trouble here, raised the rebellion, led in the fight, and was cast down to the earth.*BEST February 17, 1896, page 52.8*

Is there any way by which we can tell?*BEST February 17, 1896, page 52.9*

WHAT CAUSED THE TROUBLE IN HEAVEN?

I think we can tell very easily by reading the experience of Christ with Satan when He was here on this earth. “Therefore when they were gathered together Pilate said unto them, Whom will ye that I release unto you? Barabbas, or Jesus which is called Christ? For he knew that for envy they had delivered Him.” *Matthew 27:17, 18*. It was envy on the part of Satan against Christ that caused the war in heaven in the first place, and those who are opposed to Christ will have the same disposition to-day. Speaking of the experience of those who had been converted, and of what they had been before that, Paul says, “For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another.” *Titus 3:3*. Envy is characteristic of the natural heart, as we see from *Romans 1:29*: “Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy.” It was envy that set up the opposition to Christ when He was here in the flesh,-simply the carrying forward of that same feeling that set up the strife in heaven. What is envy?-The desire of one to occupy a higher position than he does, a feeling of great self-worthiness. Love never feels like that; “love envieth not.”*BEST February 17, 1896, page 52.10*

The Scripture points out very clearly that it was a feeling of envy on the part of Satan that led to all the trouble in heaven. “How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations? For thou hast said in thine heart,” notice the next five statements, and see how

everyone of them begins, “/ will ascend into heaven, / will exalt my throne above the stars of God: / will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: / will ascend above the heights of the clouds; / will be like the Most High.” *Isaiah 14:12-14*. Ezekiel also speaks of Satan, “Thus saith the Lord God, Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. Thou hast been in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold; the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created. Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so; thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee. By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned; therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God; and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness; I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.” *Ezekiel 28:12-17*. From these scriptures you will see that it was a feeling of envy on the part of Satan that led to the difficulty in heaven. *BEST February 17, 1896, page 52.11*

Christ was begotten, not created; Satan was created, not begotten. As the only begotten Son, Christ could enter fully into the councils of God. Because he could not do this as Christ did, envy sprang up in the heart of Satan, and he began to determine, I will exalt myself. He began to stir up rebellion, to say, God is arbitrary, and he began also to get his sympathisers. “We are in slavery, and I have a better plan of government. Choose me as leader, exalt me, and then I will exalt you.” Do you not see the same principle that has been in the world ever since the fall? You exalt me and I will exalt you,- perhaps. *BEST February 17, 1896, page 52.12*

SATAN'S DISAFFECTION

Satan succeeded in getting enough followers to make a rebellion in heaven. Being cast out there he determined to set up his kingdom

in this earth, and show to the universe that he could run a government. Gradually he would extend this government till he took away from God the dominion, and then “he would be like the Most High;” he would be God.*BEST February 17, 1896, page 52.13*

He started in just the same way that he started in heaven, by creating dissatisfaction. He said to the woman, “God knows that in the day you eat of the tree of knowledge, you will be as gods. The reason He gave why you should not eat of the tree, is not true. He told you that you would die, but that is not so. The fact is, that when you eat of the tree, you will be like Him. He does not want that, so He is keeping you down. If you listen to me and eat, you will be as gods.” And they tried it. In doing that Adam proved false to God, and passed everything into the hands of Satan.*BEST February 17, 1896, page 53.1*

ADAM AND HIS DOMINION

Adam was in a special sense the son of God. “Which was the son of Enos, which was the son of Seth, which was the son of Adam, which was the son of God.” *Luke 3:38*. He was a son of God in a different sense from what we are. The Scripture says, “Beloved now are we the sons of God.” But we are the sons of God by re-creation; Adam was the son of God by creation in the first place. He was set here to have dominion over this part of the universe as God’s representative. “And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness; and let him have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.” God made Adam His premier, and placed the dominion in his hands, recognising him as His representative in this earth.*BEST February 17, 1896, page 53.2*

THE DOMINION USURPED BY FRAUD

The devil, cast out of heaven by this war, comes to the earth, and by misrepresentation induces Adam, Christ’s representative, to hand over to him the dominion of this earth. He takes possession of it by lying and fraud; and determines to carry out here what he failed to do in heaven. This is recognised in the Scripture. Christ

said, "Hereafter I will not talk much with you; for the *prince of this world* cometh, and hath nothing in Me." *John 14:30* "In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not." *2 Corinthians 4:4*. Satan refers to this fact in the temptation of Christ in the wilderness. "And the devil, taking Him up into an high mountain, showed unto Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said unto Him, All this power will I give Thee, and the glory of them; *for that is delivered unto me, and to whomsoever I will I give it*. If Thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be Thine." *Luke 4:4-7*. He got possession of this world, and set up his kingdom, and today he says, "I am king." *BEST February 17, 1896, page 53.3*

ON WHICH SIDE ARE WE?

And whose are we? and with whom are we sympathising in this government of the earth? From this standpoint, religion resolves itself into this question, Shall I be loyal to God in this great controversy that began in heaven and is now transferred to this earth, or shall I serve Satan? Whose subject shall I be in this great controversy? *BEST February 17, 1896, page 53.4*

NATURE OF THE TWO KINGDOMS

Satan set up his kingdom by fraud and usurpation, and he maintains it by force. Those are his characteristics. But God is love. His kingdom is founded upon love, and the only power He uses in His kingdom, is the power of love. *BEST February 17, 1896, page 53.5*

The charge Satan brought against God was that He was arbitrary, determined to have His own way, and did not love His people. He promised, if the angels would follow him, to set up a better kingdom. Now it remains for this pledge to work out. While God can see the end from the beginning, created beings cannot; and had He at the first crushed out the rebellion by force; had He suppressed it by mere force, there would still have been in the minds of created beings a question of God's justice. So God lets Satan work out his plan, that all the universe may see the contrast between Satan's

plan and God's plan. And *BEST February 17, 1896, page 53.6*

THIS WORLD IS THE THEATRE

on which a drama is being enacted which is commanding the attention of the universe. We are called to be actors in this drama. The question to be worked out is, Which plan of government is the better, Satan's or God's? To which one will God's created beings give their allegiance? When God sends out His servants, what is their work? "Delivering thee from the people and from the Gentiles unto whom now I send thee. To open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins." *Acts 26:17, 18*. The question is one of loyalty to God. This may help you to see the meaning of some things which have possibly been doubtful to you. *BEST February 17, 1896, page 53.7*

THE CASE OF JOB

The case of Job is a remarkable one, and has probably been in the mind of every one who has ever had the Bible in their hands. Turn with me to the first chapter of the book of Job and follow his case with this idea in view. "There came a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them." What right had he to be there? These sons of God were God's representatives in the different parts of the universe. Adam was a son of God, and he was put on this earth to have dominion under God over it. But he betrayed his dominion, and Satan stepped in and took his place, and so, when a council was called for the representatives of God to come together to counsel about their territory, Satan came also. The roll was called, and Earth answered, Here. But it was Satan, not Adam, who answered. "And the Lord said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the Lord and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it." "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour." *1 Peter 5:8*. The Son of man came not to destroy men's lives but to save them. *He went about doing good.* *BEST February 17, 1896, page 53.8*

“And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil?” “Then Satan answered the Lord and said, Doth Job fear God for naught? Hast Thou not made an hedge about him and about his house, and about all that he hath on every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land. But put forth Thine hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse Thee to Thy face.” These are the very characteristics of Satan.*BEST February 17, 1896, page 53.9*

Do you see, the Lord says to Satan, “My servant Job, although he is in your territory, yet he remains loyal to Me.” “Oh yes,” says Satan, “but that does not prove anything. Anyone would do that for the regard that you show him. It is not love that binds Job to you. He is serving you for his reward. Anybody would do it.” Do you see the complaint there? “You have put a hedge round him. Unfair. He is in my dominion. I should think anybody would be loyal to you on those grounds.” And that was said in a council in which there were representatives from all the universe. He there made the same charge that he made in heaven. And instead of deciding the matter there in an arbitrary way, the Lord said, “Behold all that he hath is in thy power, only upon himself put not forth thine hand.” You know how it went. One after another his possessions were taken from him, and last of all his children were slain, and he was left perfectly alone. Then he was advised to give up everything. “But in all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.”*BEST February 17, 1896, page 53.10*

February 24, 1896

The Kingdom of God; or The Great Controversy Between Good and Evil

WWP

W. W. Prescott

SATAN AGAIN BEFORE GOD

“Again there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them, to present himself before the Lord. And the Lord said unto Satan, From whence comest thou? And Satan answered the Lord, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it. And the Lord said unto Satan, Hast thou considered My servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil? and still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst Me against him to destroy him without cause?” One would think that that would settle the controversy, but you never can settle anything with the right argument with Satan. “And Satan answered the Lord and said, Skin for skin, yea, all that a man hath will he give for his life. But put forth thine hand now, and touch his bone and his flesh, and he will curse Thee to Thy face.” “And the Lord said unto Satan, Behold he is in thy hand; but save his life.” *BEST February 24, 1896, page 60.1*

JOB'S INTEGRITY

And you remember the experience of Job after this, how his wife urged him to curse God and die. But still he would not yield. “Though He slay me,” he said, “yet will I trust in Him.” “As God liveth, who hath taken away my judgment; and the Almighty who hath vexed my soul; all the while my breath is in me, and the Spirit of God is in my nostrils; my lips shall not speak wickedness, nor my tongue utter deceit. God forbid that I should justify you; till I die I will not remove mine integrity from me.” *Job 27:2-5BEST February 24, 1896, page 60.2*

THE LESSON

And what did it mean? Here was a demonstration,-not simply to the few that might know of Job's case, nor to all those merely that should read of his experience, but before the whole universe,-that God's power of love was sufficient to hold a man in his integrity. Though his possessions, his children, his all was gone, yet the love that God had to him, and the love that had sprung up in his heart to God, were sufficient to hold him, so that he said, "I will not give up my loyalty though I die." Job was working out before the universe how much power there was in the love of God.*BEST February 24, 1896, page 60.3*

Many times we have experiences that we do not and cannot understand. Why this affliction? why this loss? why this trouble? Do you not see that Job was before the Universe as a man that could be trusted to reveal the power of God's love to hold him firm in his confidence, demonstrating that there is a power in God's love sufficient to stand against trial?*BEST February 24, 1896, page 60.4*

Did you ever wonder why it was that such a man as John the Baptist should end his life as he did. A great prophet, and yet he ended his life shut up in a prison. His head was cut off and his headless trunk buried by his disciples, and "they went and told Jesus." What did that mean to Jesus?-It meant to Him and to all the on-looking universe, There is a man faithful unto death. "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." The pages of history are covered with examples such as this. The martyrs of all ages have testified to the power of God's love. And remember that martyrs may be found in very humble homes. It is not always in the noblest palaces that the most heroic deeds are done. God and His universe look on and see these witnesses to His love, see that they are not turned away from their integrity by the sophistries and machinations of Satan, but are faithful unto death.*BEST February 24, 1896, page 60.5*

THE GIFT OF CHRIST GIVES THE LIE TO SATAN'S CHARGES

In the experience of Christ Himself on this earth we have an example of the working out of God's plan of government. The

charge Satan brought in the beginning was that God was arbitrary, determined to have His own way, that He did not love any one. And when Satan had turned man aside from the way of truth, and was holding him in slavery, yet "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life." And by the gift of His Son God proved that there was love in His government, and that by love He desired to have His will done. In the love He had toward His created beings He gave His only begotten Son to make it possible that His will should be done on the earth. Christ came to this earth to work out this plan, that man might be loyal to God if he chose.*BEST February 24, 1896, page 60.6*

Then you see that when Christ came, it was*BEST February 24, 1896, page 60.7*

THE CLIMAX OF THE CONTROVERSY

between Him and Satan. If Satan shall be in any way able to turn Christ, the second Adam, the representative of the human race starting out again, aside; if he can by any means overcome Him, he will triumph and establish his kingdom here. So upon Christ was brought to bear every possible temptation, and all the power of malignity that had been working in Satan for thousands of years. And to effect his purpose he followed Christ every step of the way from the manger to the cross. He was determined that Christ should not remain loyal to God while in *his* dominion. When it came to the cross of Christ's experience, Satan instigated on the part of man everything that his malignity could devise. He urged them on to overcome His human nature, that he might make Him swerve from the path of loyalty. He tried to bribe him. "Acknowledge my right to the kingdom of the earth," he said, "and I will give you all these kingdoms." But this Christ could not do; for it was *the very point of the controversy*.*BEST February 24, 1896, page 60.8*

We come to the climax of the struggle in the death of Christ. Satan's charge had been that God's government was arbitrary and hard, and that he would give his subjects a better government. The universe looked on to see it worked out. The curse of disobedience rested on the earth, but Christ came to redeem it, "being made a

curse for us.” Satan had urged on the Jews till they took His life, and thus Satan became *the murderer of the Son of God*. By His gift to the world God showed that He did desire His will-the law of love and filial obedience-to be done on earth as it is done in heaven, and in order to make it possible He was willing to give His only begotten Son to die. Satan showed that he wanted his own way badly enough that he was willing to become the murderer of the Son of God. All this was enacted before the universe, and how did it effect it?*BEST February 24, 1896, page 60.9*

GOD’S GOVERNMENT VINDICATED BEFORE THE UNIVERSE

“And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast; the same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus. Philip cometh and telleth Andrew; and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus. And Jesus answered them, saying, The hour is come, that the Son of man should be glorified.... Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw *all* unto Me.” *John 12:20-32*. And Jesus Christ, lifted up between heaven and earth on the cross, did draw both heaven and earth to Him. *Through death* He destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. It is not often a king gains his kingdom by dying, but Jesus Christ won both His kingdom and His subjects by dying, and He destroyed His enemy by death.*BEST February 24, 1896, page 60.10*

THE CROSS SEALED SATAN’S FATE

“Now shall the prince of this world be cast out. And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all unto Me.” When He was lifted up on the cross, and when He said, “It is finished,” and gave up the ghost, all heaven heard; and wherever throughout the universe there had still been in minds thoughts of rebellion and lingering sympathy for Satan, that scene on the cross showed them that Satan’s government meant that nothing should stand in his way, and that to effect his purpose he was even ready to murder the Son of God. Thus they were drawn to God by His great love. Then the fate of

Satan was sealed; he was cast out, and it was demonstrated that God is love, that He was governing by the power of love.*BEST February 24, 1896, page 60.11*

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

And think you that if Satan would not hesitate to take the life of the Son of God that he will hesitate to take your life? Think you that his plan of government is any better now? Do you not see that it is loyalty to God or to Satan? Do you not see that we have either to put ourselves under Satan's leadership and fight against Christ, or to put ourselves under the leadership of Christ to fight against Satan? Which side are *you* on? Which side are *you* choosing to-night? "Ye are a spectacle to the world, to angels, and to men." Who has your name enrolled in his book. Are you enrolled as fighting under the blood-stained banner of the Lamb, as a loyal subject of God; or as fighting under the black banner of Satan, against the government of God?*BEST February 24, 1896, page 60.12*

This question of the two kingdoms is going on till Christ shall come the second time to take His kingdom. We are very near that time now. All one has to do is to read the Scripture and the signs of the times to know that it is near. Little argument is needed to show any one who will read the Scripture and the signs of the times that the day of the Lord's coming is near and hasteth greatly. The controversy is in its height. Tremendous power is being brought to bear to hold subjects in the kingdom of Satan. He is bringing upon people every device to hold them in the bonds of sin; to take their minds away from the realisation of the near coming of Christ, and fill them with pleasure and self-seeking. But Christ is at work in the earth, and is to-day selecting those who will be loyal to Him. And what does it mean to be loyal to Him?-It means to*BEST February 24, 1896, page 60.13*

OBEY THE LAWS OF THE REALM

Christ has proclaimed the conditions of membership into His kingdom. He has sent His servants throughout the world, saying,

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.” *Matthew 28:19, 20*. To-day they are preaching that the coming of His kingdom is near; and they are gathering out those who will be loyal to God.*BEST February 24, 1896, page 61.1*

It costs something to be loyal to God now. It cost Job something; but there is a power in the love of Jesus Christ to hold; there is something in His love that will satisfy every longing soul, and fill with fatness all who will come to Him. The call is now, “Come out from among them, and be ye separate.”*BEST February 24, 1896, page 61.2*

The two kingdoms cannot be joined together. And yet there has seemed to be a tendency to try to make them run together. You cannot do it. They are perfectly opposed to each other; light and darkness will not mix. Love and hate are opposite characteristics, and will not co-mingle. At the crucifixion the cross of Jesus Christ made a separation between the repentant and the unrepentant, and to-day it makes the same division. And God is now sending forth*BEST February 24, 1896, page 61.3*

A SPECIAL MESSAGE

for loyalty to His law. He calls upon every one now who will, to yield himself to obey the laws of His realm; and more than that, He has set up in this last generation a wonderful sign of loyalty. There is a special call to that portion of His law which has been set aside. “Hallow My Sabbaths.” “They shall be a sign between Me and you that ye may know that I am the Lord your God.” *Ezekiel 20:20*. In this generation the Lord has set up His Sabbath as a special sign that He created the heavens and the earth through Jesus Christ. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made.” *John 1:1-3*.*BEST February 24, 1896, page 61.4*

The Sabbath is set up as a special sign of loyalty to God, of obedience to His laws, and of our belief in the creating power and

the divinity of Jesus Christ our Lord. Shall we choose Him as our Lord, and step from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light? He is coming soon, and when He comes, He whose right it is to reign will reign. He has redeemed the earth, and He will save when He comes every one who has been obedient to His laws and has identified himself with Christ as leader.*BEST February 24, 1896, page 61.5*

“And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse, and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns; and He had a name written that no man knew but He Himself. And He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood, and His name is called the Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations and He shall rule them with a rod of iron and He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords.” *Revelation 19:11-16*. Is He our King and *our* Lord? Those who recognise Him now as King of kings and Lord of lords, will be prepared, when He is revealed, to say, “Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us; this is the Lord; we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation.” *Isaiah 25:9*.*BEST February 24, 1896, page 61.6*

March 2, 1896

God or Caesar, Which?

WWP

W. W. Prescott

November 5, 1895 Armadale Camp-meeting Talk

“Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk. And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men. Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not? But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites? Shew me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a penny. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? They say unto him, Caesar’s. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s; and unto God the things that are God’s. When they had heard these words, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way.” (*Matthew 22:15-22.*)*BEST March 2, 1896, page 68.1*

The Pharisees and Herodians were completely answered in these words. A sharp distinction was drawn between the things of God and the things of Caesar; that is, the things which pertain to God,-religion, and the things which pertain to Caesar,-civil government. There was not one of those Pharisees or Herodians that had any ground to stand upon after He had made that answer. There was not one of them that thought it was any use to say, “That general principle is good, but you see there are some things in which God and Caesar are in partnership. What about that?” They did not dare to say a word. When He said, “Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s, and unto God the things that are God’s,” they marvelled and went their way, because in those few words He had laid down those eternal principles of right, and had so completely answered them that there was nothing more to be said.*BEST March 2, 1896, page 68.2*

It was announced that we would consider this evening something of the evils of religious legislation; God or Caesar, Which? or the evils which result from religious legislation, in mixing up God and Caesar.*BEST March 2, 1896, page 68.3*

A PLAIN DISTINCTION

As a foundation, I want first to draw a distinction between the things of God and the things of Caesar. "Caesar" stands for civil government. The things of Caesar are those which have to do with civil government. The things of God are those which have to do with God, our relation to God, our duty to God, everything that pertains to God as a personal matter between us and God. I want to lay down for our consideration the contrast between the things of God and the things of Caesar; the contrast between the realms in which they rule, their subjects, and their manner of ruling. To make it plain we will draw a simple diagram:—*BEST March 2, 1896, page 68.4*

God.	Caesar.
Mind.	Body.
Thought.	Action.
Sin.	Crime.
Moral.	Civil.
Forgiveness.	Penalty.
Love.	Force.
Eternal.	Temporal.

THE TWO REALMS

First as to the realms in which they rule. God in Jesus Christ rules the *mind*; Caesar the *body*. Let us stop on this a moment. When Jesus Christ came to set up His kingdom, He came to set up a different sort of a kingdom than had existed. Human power and the kingdom of this world-Caesar- had ruled the body, they had ruled the outward conduct, but here comes Jesus Christ to set up a kingdom within a kingdom, to have a kingdom, to have subjects, and to have that right in this world, where Caesar's kingdom is.*BEST March 2, 1896, page 68.5*

But while men had been-shall I say satisfied-not always that, and yet it was all Caesar could do to rule the body,-Jesus Christ comes to set up His kingdom in the mind; that is, to rule the thoughts, while Caesar has his kingdom over the body, and rules actions. This is not to say that Jesus Christ does not rule actions, but He gets behind actions, and controls actions through thought. They had had laws in the world, they had God's law in the world, but Jesus Christ came to show what that law meant, to live it Himself, and to teach it as it meant to God. And so He explained it as we read *Matthew 5*, where Christ Himself, the very one who spoke the law from Sinai, now, with His divinity veiled in humanity, comes on the mount, and speaks that law over again, and gives it a spiritual meaning.*BEST March 2, 1896, page 68.6*

"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment; but I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment." This is further expressed in *1 John 3:15*: "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer." "Ye have heard how it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery; but I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." He further explains that covetousness is idolatry, and this is set forth in *Ephesians 5:2-5*: "And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour. But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints. Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient; but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, *who is an idolater*, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God."*BEST March 2, 1896, page 68.7*

This is Christ's interpretation of how the law of God applies. This does not apply simply to the outward act. Caesar rules the outward conduct. I may stand before a man, I may hate him with a perfect hatred, and I may tell him so to his face, but Caesar says nothing to me. Caesar has nothing to do with it. But suppose my hatred grows into action, and I proceed to do the man violence. Caesar says, "You must keep your hate within yourself, or I shall come in and

interfere.” But I am just as much in God’s sight a murderer when I hate my brother as though I had taken his life. It is better for civil society that there are laws to restrain the outward manifestation of that hate, but in God’s sight I am a murderer when I hate *BEST March 2, 1896, page 68.8*

But suppose Caesar should attempt to enforce this law as God explains it, will you tell me how many would be left outside the prison walls to guard those within? Suppose he should come into this tent, and, taking the law as God explains it, should say, “I am here for every man who has ever been a murderer.” How many, do you think, would be left to listen to the sermon? God in Christ rules the hearts, and Christ came to do that which it is impossible for man to do,-to rule the very thoughts of the heart. And He explains that no service is acceptable to Him unless it is heart-service. *BEST March 2, 1896, page 68.9*

The Pharisees had plenty of religion of their kind. They liked to display it, and they kept bringing it forth. They had come to Christ to display it. They came to Him asking why His disciples ate with unwashen hands. I will not read the record, but Christ answered them, saying, “Hear, and understand: Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man.” “Then answered Peter and said unto Him, Declare unto us this parable.” “And Jesus said, Do ye not yet understand, that whatsoever entereth in at the mouth goeth into the belly and is cast out into the draught. But those things which proceed out of the mouth come forth from the heart; and they defile the man. For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies; these are the things which defile a man; but to eat with unwashen hands defileth not a man.” *Matthew 15:10, 11, 15-20. BEST March 2, 1896, page 68.10*

THOUGHT PRECEDES ACTION

Every overt act is preceded by thought. No man ever does a thing he has not thought of. Now many are thinking, I suppose, “I question that, because I have done things I did not intend to do. And I did them because I did not think.” I tell you the very reason you did them without thinking was because you had done them so

many times before that *by thinking* it had become habit. I say that every act is preceded by the thought, and that thought is the very character of your being. It is in the inmost thought, the inner self, where character dwells. Man may be restrained by outward forms from expressing himself; he may be but a whited sepulchre. And if the sepulchre is whitewashed outside, Caesar has nothing to say; he cannot enter into the temple of the heart and control thought. Jesus Christ sets up His kingdom in the mind; His subjects are the thoughts of the heart, and no one is pure in God's sight unless his very thought is pure; no one is free from transgression unless his very thoughts are in harmony with God. Says the Scripture, "Casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." *2 Corinthians 10:5*. That is religion and Jesus Christ can do that for us. But when Caesar has attempted to invade the realm of the mind, when he has stepped out of his place and tried to control what only Jesus Christ can control,-the inmost thoughts of the heart,-then we have had written in blood some of the darkest pages of human history. *BEST March 2, 1896, page 69.1*

SIN AND CRIME

God in Jesus Christ deals with *sin*; Caesar deals with *crime*. The Scripture says, "The thought of foolishness is sin;" but it is not crime. Therefore as Jesus Christ dwells in the mind, ruling the thoughts, anything contrary to His thought is sin, and He deals with sin. Sin is defined in the Scripture to be the "transgression of the law," and Jesus Christ in His kingdom deals with sin. Caesar has nothing to do with sin; it is crime that he deals with. Sin is the transgression of God's law in the thought of the heart. Sin is a lapse from holiness, and holiness dwells in the inmost heart. Anything different to that is sin; but Caesar cannot inquire about that. He waits till the thought becomes an overt act contrary to his law; because while God has a law to rule the heart, Caesar has a law to rule the action. When one transgresses Caesar's law he may or may not have sinned against God, but it is crime. There should be a very careful distinction drawn between sin and crime. Crime is transgression of human law; sin is transgression of God's law as interpreted by Jesus Christ. Sin may or may not be crime. A man

may be a murderer of the blackest type before God, and not be guilty of a crime. I may be an idolater, breaking God's law every day, and not have committed a single crime. I may be dark and deep-stained with sin, and not commit any crime.*BEST March 2, 1896, page 69.2*

MORALITY AND CIVILITY

God's government is *moral*; Caesar's government is *civil*. Christ deals with morality. But we must understand what morality is. There is an accommodated sense of the word, in which we say, "He is not a Christian, but he is a moral man." When we come to the strict sense of the word, it means "One that is in harmony with God's law." The word "civil" has to do with the relations between man and man; the word "moral" has to do with the relations between man and God. The truly moral man will be civil, you may be sure of that, and the only purpose of civil government is to make those men civil who would not be otherwise, who are not governed by the higher law of morality, the law of God in the heart.*BEST March 2, 1896, page 69.3*

The object, and the only object, of Caesar's government is,-not to give men rights, God does that,-but to protect men in their God-given rights. No company of men can confer rights upon any other company of men, but they can protect them in the proper use of those rights which they already have. Those rights belong to them, they are given them of God. Men will not be moral; then Caesar comes in with his power, and compels, and properly too, those men who will not be moral, to be civil. Outward conduct is civility; inward conduct is morality. God lives in the heart, making men moral by conferring upon them His own moral character. But Caesar cannot do this; he cannot get into the mind and see when men are committing sin. All he can do is to look at the body, see whether men are committing crime or not, and make them civil if they will not be moral.*BEST March 2, 1896, page 69.4*

FORGIVENESS v. PENALTY

Further, God in Christ exercises *forgiveness* in His government;

Caesar knows no forgiveness, he knows nothing but the *penalty*. A man commits a sin against God, he has been a sinner all his life, but he sees Christ lifted up, and hears the promise, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness," and he accepts that promise; and right there his sins are forgiven; his load of crime is entirely removed; and he stands before God as though he had never committed a sin in his life. But if a man commits a crime, he may be ever so sorry, and he may confess to Caesar, but Caesar says, "Settle that with your Maker; I know nothing but the penalty." *BEST March 2, 1896, page 69.5*

If we should introduce into civil government the principles God uses in His kingdom, we should have perfect confusion. Look at these principles: "Then came Peter to Him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times, but, Until seventy times seven." "Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him. And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him." *Matthew 18:21, 22; Luke 17:3, 4BEST March 2, 1896, page 69.6*

Suppose we should apply this principle to civil government. Here is a man arrested for horse stealing. He is brought up before the judge, and says, "I am very sorry, and the Bible says you must forgive." The judge says, "You are forgiven." He goes out and steals another horse, is brought back, and again forgiven. He does that seven times over. How do you think the judge would feel? I think that by the time he had reached the seventh experience he would think that there was some mistake about the law. These principles, which are the very glory of God's moral government, the very glory of His character, we cannot apply to Caesar's government. God does forgive, even to seventy times seven, and He does it for us, thank God, but these principles do not belong here; they are for a different realm, and God, by the gift of His Son, has so provided that He can exercise forgiveness and still maintain the character of His law. By the sacrifice of Jesus Christ God has upheld the character of His government, keeps His law where it belongs, and

yet holds out forgiveness to all that believe on His Son. Because of His wonderful provision for the stability of His government, God's law is not brought into disrepute when the man who has broken it again and again turns about and says, "I repent."*BEST March 2, 1896, page 69.7*

By forgiving, civil government would break down the whole system of government; but God keeps His law where it belongs, and yet forgives everyone who repents.*BEST March 2, 1896, page 69.8*

March 9, 1896

God or Caesar, Which?

WWP

W. W. Prescott

LOVE v. FORCE

In order to carry on His government on the earth God uses *love*, and love only, as His power; Caesar knows nothing of the power of love, and uses only *force*. In *Jeremiah 31:3* God says, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love;" and in *Romans 2:4* we read, "Or despisest thou the riches of His goodness;... not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son," and He depends wholly and only upon the power of that love in Jesus Christ to win men to submit themselves to Him. *BEST March 9, 1896, page 76.1*

Most men when they die lose their kingdoms, and lose control over their subjects. Jesus Christ, the King of Israel, gained both His kingdom and His followers by dying. And so it is upon the love of God in Jesus Christ that God depends, and though He has been charged with having an arbitrary government, yet He waits and waits, and displays His love again and again to draw men to Him. But He compels none. God gives to every man freedom of will to choose or refuse Him. If he says, "I will not have this man to reign over me," God does not reign over him. That is God's method of government. But Caesar knows no such government. He simply controls the body. When the thought goes into outward act, Caesar takes the body and puts it under control, that the man may not be able to express that thought further; but that man, even though shut up in a dungeon, may go right on sinning against God at every breath. Caesar cannot help that. He can prevent a man's thought from expressing itself in any way to injure his fellowman; but God looks through stones and bars into the heart, and in His sight that man is still a sinner, though he is kept from manifesting it by the power of the sword. *BEST March 9, 1896, page 76.2*

Further, God deals wholly with things that are *eternal*; Caesar with things that are *temporal*. God Himself is eternal. "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." It was through the eternal Spirit that Christ offered Himself for us. It is eternal life that He holds out as a reward. Caesar knows nothing of such things as that. He is not supposed to know whether a man is on the road to heaven or hell. He is not supposed to make inquiry where he proposes to spend his time in the future. All he is to ask is, "What are you doing to-day?" Caesar's punishment has nothing to do with eternity. He simply deals with temporal gifts, temporal punishments, temporal rewards; nothing more.*BEST March 9, 1896, page 76.3*

Then we have the contrast. God in Christ deals with the mind; Caesar with the body. God with the thoughts; Caesar with the actions. God with sin; Caesar with crime. God with morals; Caesar with civil things. God exercises forgiveness, Caesar imposes the penalty. God uses love, Caesar, force. God deals with eternal things; Caesar with temporal things. These are sharply defined distinctions.*BEST March 9, 1896, page 76.4*

THE POWERS THAT BE

But is it not true that the powers that be are ordained of God?—Certainly. "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers [notice carefully how it reads; for every word has a meaning. If it is only higher power, there is something beyond that.]; for there is no power but of God, and the powers that be are ordained of God." It is in God's order that there should be civil governments on the earth. And we are to yield obedience to those governments. Then, you say, what is the trouble?—There is no trouble if we put the other right with it. "Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's, *and to God the things that are God's*." The very idea of civil government is of God, and He has ordained civil rulers over this realm; but not to rule over His realm. He has drawn the line of distinction between the two, and has ordained the powers that be to rule over things civil, and leave Him to rule over things moral. When Caesar confines his actions to his own sphere, every Christian is enjoined

by God to be obedient; that is a part of his Christianity. There should be no one more loyal to civil government, when it is in the sphere to which God ordained it, than the Christian. He should be the model citizen; but when Caesar tries to put himself in the place of God, he makes bad work. He cannot take the place of God. God says, "Stay where I put you, and I command every one of My followers to obey you; but do not come over into My realm; for you cannot carry on My government. Stay in your sphere, and you will have every one of My subjects to be your subjects; but if you get into My realm, You will spoil your subjects and Mine too." God has made this very plain. Let us go to the Scripture for instruction.*BEST March 9, 1896, page 76.5*

THE THREE HEBREWS AND THE FIERY FURNACE

Nebuchadnezzar the king built a great image all of gold, and set it up on the plain of Dura. He made a proclamation, calling the princes, captains, governors, and subjects of his realm to the dedication of the image. At the sound of the music everyone was to bow down and worship this image, which was really to worship Nebuchadnezzar, because he had had a vision of an image whose head was of gold, representing himself, and from this he made an image all of gold, and set it up to represent himself. In the company were three men, Jewish captives, who had been placed in office by Nebuchadnezzar. When the sound of music was heard, and the whole company prostrated themselves, those three men stood up, and certain ones went and told the king. He was furious with rage, and commanded them to bring the three men before him, and he said unto them, "Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, do ye not serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up?" "I tell you that whosoever does not fall down and worship this image will be cast into the burning fiery furnace." "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego answered and said unto the King Nebuchadnezzar, We are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."*BEST March 9, 1896, page 76.6*

At this answer Nebuchadnezzar was all the more enraged, and commanded that the furnace should be heated seven times hotter than it was wont to be, and that the three men should be cast in. Why, he said, I am Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon; God Himself has ordained me. What right have these men to disobey my commands? And we have the prophecy concerning Nebuchadnezzar in *Jeremiah 27:5-7*: "I have made the earth, the man and the beast that are upon the ground, by My great power and by My outstretched arm, and have given it unto whom it seemed meet unto Me. And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, *My servant*; and the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him. And all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son, until the very time of his land come: and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him." "And he commanded the most mighty men of his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, and to cast them into the burning fiery furnace. Therefore, because the king's commandment was urgent, and the furnace exceeding hot, the flame of the fire slew those men that took up Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego. And these three men, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, fell down bound into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. Then Nebuchadnezzar the king was astonished, and rose up in haste and spake, and said unto his counsellors, Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said unto the king, True, O king. He answered and said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God. Then Nebuchadnezzar came near to the mouth of the burning fiery furnace, and spake, and said, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, ye servants of the most high God, come forth, and come hither. Then Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego came forth of the midst of the fire. And the princes, governors, and captains, and king's counsellors, being gathered together saw these men, upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was an hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them." *BEST March 9, 1896, page 76.7*

THE LESSON

What was the lesson in this for the king? God was saying to

Nebuchadnezzar, "You are out of your place. You are My servant; I gave you authority, but not to exercise in My realm. Any command you give contrary to My commands, I will bring it to confusion." And the lesson is for us in this day. When Caesar gets out of his place, and steps across the line that divides things civil from things moral, God says, "Get back into your place."*BEST March 9, 1896, page 76.8*

MEDO-PERSIA SUCCEEDED BABYLON

Just according to the prophecy, Nebuchadnezzar, his son, and his son's son ruled the kingdom. We will read the record in Daniel. "Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand." And he commanded to bring in the gold and silver vessels which his grandfather had taken of the temple of the Lord. But while the feast was going on, there came a bloodless hand and wrote on the wall. Belshazzar trembled, and sent for his wise men to read the writing, but no man among them could read it. Then they told him of a man who had interpreted a vision for his grandfather. He commanded him to be sent for, and Daniel was brought before the king. "And this is the writing that was written, Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin. This is the interpretation of the thing: Mene; God hath numbered thy kingdom and finished it. Tekel; Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting. Peres; Thy kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and Persians. In that night was Belshazzar the king of the Chaldeans slain. And Darius the Median took the kingdom." God had raised up this new kingdom; for we have the prophecy of the fall of Babylon in *Isaiah 21:2*: "A grievous vision is declared unto me; the treacherous dealer dealeth treacherously, and the spoiler spoileth. Go up, O Elam; besiege, O Media." It was in God's providence that Babylon fell.*BEST March 9, 1896, page 76.9*

And now we have another lesson.*BEST March 9, 1896, page 77.1*

DANIEL IN THE LIONS' DEN

After Darius had taken the kingdom, we find that Daniel was preferred above the other princes of the kingdom, and that he was

made first president of the realm. That of course roused envy, and the men went to work to get his place. They went to king Darius, and said, "King Darius, live forever. All the presidents of the kingdom, the governors, and the princes, the counsellors and the captains, have consulted together to establish a royal statute, and to make a firm decree, that whosoever shall ask a petition of any god or man for thirty days, save of thee, O king, he shall be cast into the den of lions. Now, O king, establish the decree, and sign the writing, that it be not changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not. Wherefore king Darius signed the writing and the decree.*BEST March 9, 1896, page 77.2*

"Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime." He had been accustomed to pray three times a day, and when king Darius forbade him to pray to God, he paid no attention whatever. He did not close his window and sit in his chair, so that they would not know whether he was praying or not. He got down on his knees and prayed as he had aforetime.*BEST March 9, 1896, page 77.3*

Now these men had had just what they wanted. They had heard Daniel pray. No doubt they had heard him pray before that, but they were interested in *this* prayer. Then these men came unto the king and said, "That Daniel, which is of the children of the captivity of Judah, regardeth not thee, O king, nor the decree that thou hast signed, but maketh his petition three times a day. Then the king when he heard these words, was sore displeased with himself, and set his heart on Daniel to deliver him: and he laboured till the going down of the sun to deliver him. Then these men assembled unto the king, and said unto the king, Know, O king, that the law of the Medes and Persians is, That no decree nor statute which the king established may be changed. Then the king commanded, and they brought Daniel, and cast him into the den of lions. Now the king spake and said unto Daniel, Thy God, whom thou servest continually, He will deliver thee. And a stone was brought and laid upon the mouth of the den; and the king sealed it with his own signet, and with the signet of his lords; that the purpose might not be changed concerning Daniel. Then the king went to his palace

and passed the night fasting: neither were instruments of music brought before him: and his sleep went from him. Then the king arose very early in the morning, and went in haste unto the den of lions. And when he came to the den he cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel: and the king spake and said to Daniel, O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God whom thou servest continually able to deliver thee from the lions? Then said Daniel unto the king, O king, live forever. My God hath sent His angel and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me; forasmuch as before Him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt." What! had he not broken the law?-Yes; but the king was out of his place in making it, and therefore it was no offence to go contrary to it. And God showed this to be so.*BEST March 9, 1896, page 77.4*

What is the lesson?-God is saying, Caesar, "Keep out of My realm; keep on your own side of the fence. The minute you come over here I give My subjects perfect right to disobey you. I will stand by them in it." And He did.*BEST March 9, 1896, page 77.5*

March 16, 1896

God or Caesar, Which?

WWP

W. W. Prescott

Thus the contest between civil encroachments on the domains of God and fidelity to God went on till Jesus Christ came. Then the Roman Empire filled the world. Macaulay says of it: "It was the sublimest incarnation of power, and a monument, the mightiest of greatness built by human hands, which has upon this planet been suffered to appear." When Jesus Christ came, all the attention paid to Him was to put His name down and tax Him the same as they had the cattle. But He had a mission to this world, and that was to bring freedom to the mind, to bring freedom to the thought, to deliver the captives that were bound by the power of sin. He was to present the character of God and to preach the kingdom of God. We can read that in the very first of the gospel by Mark. "Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel."

Mark 1:14, 15. BEST March 16, 1896, page 84.1

The Roman Empire had gods many and lords many, but the one god that stood over all was the Roman state itself. They regarded Caesar, the head of the government, as divine, and they worshipped him as the very incarnation of the government. They reasoned thus: "Rome has conquered the world. The gods of Rome have done this, and chief among them is the Roman state." This religion of theirs was not a theory; it was wondrous practical, and I think I will take the time to read a brief extract from Gibbon on this point:—*BEST March 16, 1896, page 84.2*

"The religion of the nations was not merely a speculative doctrine professed in the schools or preached in the temples. The innumerable deities and rites of polytheism were closely interwoven with every circumstance of business or pleasure, of public or of private life; and it seemed impossible to escape the observance of

them, without, at the same time, renouncing the commerce of mankind and all the offices and amusements of society.... The public spectacles were an essential part of the cheerful devotion of the pagans, and the gods were supposed to accept, as the most grateful offering, the games that the prince and the people celebrated in honour of their peculiar customs. The Christian, who with pious horror, avoided the abomination of the circus or the theatre, found himself encompassed with infernal snares in every convivial entertainment, as often as his friends, invoking the hospitable deities, poured out libations to each other's happiness. When the bride, struggling with well-affected reluctance, was forced in hymeneal pomp over the threshold of her new habitation, or when the sad procession of the dead slowly moved toward the funeral pile, the Christian, on these interesting occasions, was compelled to desert the persons who were dearest to him, rather than contract the guilt inherent to those pious ceremonies. Every art and every trade that was in the least concerned in the framing or adorning of idols, was polluted by the stain of idolatry.*BEST March 16, 1896, page 84.3*

"The dangerous temptations which on every side lurked in ambush to surprise the unguarded believer, assailed him with redoubled violence on the day of solemn festivals. So artfully were they framed and disposed throughout the year, that superstition always wore the appearance of pleasure, and often of virtue.... On the days of general festivity, it was the custom of the ancients to adorn their doors with lamps and with branches of laurel, and to crown their heads with garland of flowers. This innocent and elegant practice might have been tolerated as a mere civil institution. But it most unluckily happened that the doors were under the protection of the household gods, that the laurel was sacred to the lover of Daphne, and that garland of flowers, though frequently worn as a symbol of either joy or mourning, had been dedicated in their first origin to the service of superstition. The trembling Christians who were persuaded in this instance to comply with the fashions of their country and the commands of the magistrates, laboured under the most gloomy apprehensions from the reproaches of their own conscience, the censures of the church, and the denunciations of Divine vengeance."*BEST March 16, 1896, page 84.4*

And it was so that the Christian could hardly turn round, could not go to the funeral or marriage of a friend, because of the idolatrous practices interwoven with these ceremonies. His Christianity completely separated him from his friends, from the government, for the Romans would have no interference with their religion. According to Neander they had a law declaring that, "whoever introduces new religions, the tendency and character of which are unknown, whereby the minds of men may be disturbed, shall, if belonging to the higher rank, be banished; if to the lower, punished with death." *BEST March 16, 1896, page 84.5*

CHRIST AND THE ROMAN LAW

Jesus Christ was one of the lower rank, and He went up and down in Judea, teaching a new religion. The Pharisees knew this, and although they hated and despised the Roman government, although they plotted to overthrow it, although they hoped that Jesus Christ, when He came, would lead a revolution against it, yet when they saw that that was not His plan, they purposed to get the Roman government to overthrow Him. And when it came to His trial, they tried to get a condemnation from Pilate on the charge of blasphemy: for, they said, "He made Himself the Son of God." "When Pilate therefore heard that saying, he was the more afraid: and went again into the judgment hall, and saith unto Jesus, Whence art Thou? But Jesus gave him no answer." Pilate tried to release Him, "but the Jews cried out saying, If thou let this man go, thou art not Caesar's friend; whosoever maketh himself a king speaketh against Caesar." And Pilate knew that if he did not accede to their request that there would a word go to Tiberius the cruel, "Pilate your governor has allowed an insurrection to go on here, and has refused to have anything to say against it." And so he did what they wanted him to do. What was the charge?-Unfriendly to Caesar. That was the charge on which Jesus Christ was put to death. It was *contrary to the law* for Him to teach a new religion, but He did it. And for this they put Him to death. *BEST March 16, 1896, page 84.6*

THE APOSTLES AND THE POWERS THAT BE

He was raised from the dead, and called His disciples together, and

said to them, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Go throughout the whole Roman Empire and preach the gospel to every creature; yet He knew that that was directly contrary to the law of Rome. The disciples went and preached as they were instructed, and then the civil authorities came down upon them. The disciples were put in prison, but "the angel of the Lord by night opened the doors and brought them forth and said, Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life. And when they heard that, they entered into the temple early in the morning and taught. But the high priest came and they that were with him, and called the council together, and all the senate of the children of Israel, and sent to the prison to have them brought. But when the officers came and found them not in the prison, they returned and told, saying, The prison truly found we shut with all safety, and the keepers standing without before the doors; but when we had opened, we found no man within. Now when the high priest and the captain of the temple heard these things, they doubted of them whereunto this would grow. Then came one, and told them, saying, Behold, the men whom ye put in prison are standing in the temple and teaching the people. Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without violence; for they feared the people, lest they should have been stoned. And when they had brought them, they set them before the council, and the high priest asked them, saying, Did we not straightly command you that ye should not teach in this name? And behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. Then Peter and the other apostles answered, and said, *We ought to obey God rather than man.*" Yet it was *contrary to law*. *BEST March 16, 1896, page 84.7*

Paul, who had himself been a persecutor, after he had been converted took Barnabas, and went out preaching, *contrary to law*. They passed through Asia Minor preaching the word, and on coming to Philippi, healed a woman possessed of an evil spirit. "But when her master saw that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the market place unto the rulers. And brought them to the Magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city." They did not trouble the city at all. They simply took away from the man his hope of gain. They shut them in prison, but the prison doors were thrown

open,-God's way of teaching them a lesson.*BEST March 16, 1896, page 84.8*

Again, we have the experience of the apostles in the *17th chapter* of Acts. "Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three Sabbath days reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you, is Christ. And some of them believed, and consorted with Paul and Silas; and of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few. But the Jews, which believed not, moved with envy, took unto them certain lewd fellows of the baser sort, and gathered a company, and set all the city on an uproar, and assaulted the house of Jason, and sought to bring them out to the people. And when they found them not, they drew Jason, and certain brethren unto the rulers of the city, crying, These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also." And these men, that had themselves put the whole town in an uproar, took these noble men, and brought them to the magistrates, and said, "These men have turned the whole world upside down."*BEST March 16, 1896, page 84.9*

At every step the apostles were hounded with that law, and yet Christ said, "Go, ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." They fought it out, and bled and died, and kept the fight up for centuries, till the Roman Empire was compelled to yield. That is what brought*BEST March 16, 1896, page 84.10*

LIBERTY INTO THE WORLD

God was saying to Caesar, "Keep on your side of the fence. Let My subjects teach in My realm." This had to be learned over and over again. It had to be learned in the Reformation; but the liberty that was preserved in the Dark Ages, and the liberty that we have today, we owe to the establishment of that principle that Caesar has to do with the things of Caesar, and God with the things of God. God will take care of His followers in doing this, and He commands everyone of them to render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's when he stays in his own realm.*BEST March 16, 1896, page 84.11*

Let me say further, that unless these things are kept separate as God has put them, it will destroy both the church and the state. When the Jews crucified Christ, they said, "His blood be upon us and our children forever," and it was. Of all the horrible pages of history the most horrible is the siege of Jerusalem, when mothers ate their own children; but these things came upon them because they mixed the things of God and the things of Caesar, and took hold of the arm of Caesar to control the things of God. They suffered the penalty. Their nation as a nation was at that time brought low, and has never recovered. And the lesson is the same to-day. Let me say that any religion that needs the support of Caesar is not worth supporting. I care not what religion it is. Jesus Christ did not call for Caesar to help Him. He depended upon the power and the love of God to win for Him. And they have won. The Roman Empire has gone down in destruction, but the kingdom of Jesus Christ lives; for it is not of this world. It is founded on eternal principles. It lives and will live. But any church that fancies it necessary to call upon Caesar for help is not worthy to live. It had better die. Any church that asks Caesar for help, any church that accepts the proffered help, is not a Christian Church; it is Caesarian. Any form of Christianity that fancies it necessary to get the support of the civil power is ready to die. *BEST March 16, 1896, page 84.12*

THESE LESSONS FOR US TO-DAY

These lessons, written on the pages of sacred history, wherein God has put underlying principles, are for us to-day. What means it that in every land there is a growing desire to put together the things that God has separated? I have reports from every land of the desire to unite the church and the state. There is a demand made for it, and I regret to say that the demand comes from the side of the church. What does it mean? It is a sign of the times. I want to tell you my friends, that this seeking for the aid of Caesar on the part of the church, is the published confession before God and man that the church has *lost the power of God*. When a church has the power of God it despises the power of Caesar; it wants none of it. Think of exchanging the power of God and the religion of Jesus

Christ for the power of man and hypocrisy; because all that Caesar can do is to control the actions. God has made the mind free, and even Jesus Christ, who came to save the world, said, "If any man believe not, I judge him not." He came not to condemn, but to save.*BEST March 16, 1896, page 85.1*

When the church takes the power of the civil government to aid in anything that pertains to the things of God, it is a published confession, before God, before all heaven, and before man,-a confession that Christianity should blush to make, that it has lost the power God has given it. Christ said, "All power in heaven and earth is given unto Me." Who would exchange that power for the paltry power of Caesar? This is for us. Have nothing to do with it. Let alone that cursed union between church and state, which has wrought the misery of the ages, and has written in blood thousands of pages of history, and slain millions of martyrs. Have you not seen enough of it to understand the ruin it will cause? Will you not say, God rather than Caesar; religion rather than hypocrisy?*BEST March 16, 1896, page 85.2*

Civil government cannot touch religion at any point, it matters not where it is, without involving a mixture which will bring trouble to both the church and the state. "Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's." God will bless, sustain, and keep everyone that does this. No matter at what sacrifice-houses, friends, property,-obey God rather than man. Everyone who desires to make his religion practical is earnestly urged to keep these principles in mind.*BEST March 16, 1896, page 85.3*

April 20, 1896

The Law in Christ or, the Relation Between the Law and the Gospel

WWP

W. W. Prescott

1895 Undated Talk

All that man has lost through sin has been restored “through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.” “For this purpose the Son of God was manifested that He might destroy [undo] the works of the devil.” *1 John 3:8*. All this is accomplished for us, “not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost, which He shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour.” *Titus 3:5, 6*. *BEST April 20, 1896, page 114.1*

And yet God does not make His plan of salvation effective for any individual without his co-operation. God has honoured man by bestowing upon him reasoning powers and the freedom of choice, and while man can by no means save himself, yet it is not God's plan to save him contrary to his will. He says to him: “Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” *Isaiah 1:18*. “He that will [willeth or chooseth] let him take of the water of life freely.” *Revelation 22:17*, R. V. *BEST April 20, 1896, page 114.2*

In the beginning “God created man in His own image,” “in the likeness of God made He him.” But this image has been marred and well nigh obliterated by sin. Yet “God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (*John 3:16*), that thus through Him, “who is the image of the invisible God,” man might be “created in Christ Jesus unto good works” (*Ephesians 2:10*), and restored to the image of God, by being “conformed to the image of His Son.” *Romans 8:29*. The wondrous provisions of God's grace whereby “He might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth

in Jesus" (*Romans* 3:26) have nothing less than this in view, that "as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." *1 Corinthians* 15:49. *BEST April 20, 1896, page 114.3*

The agency employed by God to bring about this result is called "the gospel," which is defined to be "the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." *Romans* 1:16. It is "the gospel of your salvation," "the gospel of the grace of God," "the gospel of peace," the same gospel which was "preached before... unto Abraham" (*Galatians* 3:8), and afterwards to the children of Israel, "for unto us was the gospel preached, *as well as unto them.*" *Hebrews* 4:2. This gospel of Christ is God's divine power to save believers, "for therein is the righteousness of God revealed." *Romans* 1:17. The righteousness of God is revealed in the gospel; and for that reason the gospel "is the power of God unto salvation." It is salvation from sin and restoration to a life of righteousness which are needed, and this experience is provided for us through the incarnation, the death, and the resurrection of Christ, who "was made in the likeness of men," and "who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification." *Romans* 4:25. But this is the gospel; for we read: "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel... by which also ye are saved.... For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures." *1 Corinthians* 15:1-4. *BEST April 20, 1896, page 114.4*

The efficacy of the gospel is also presented in these words: "For Christ sent me not to baptise, but to preach the gospel; not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect. For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." *1 Corinthians* 1:17, 18. The gospel is the *power of God* to every one that believeth. A discourse concerning the cross is, to those who are saved, the *power of God*, because the cross of Christ—Christ the crucified Saviour dying for sin—is the central thought of the gospel. So also we read again: "But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, *Christ the power of*

God and the wisdom of God.” *1 Corinthians 1:23, 24.**BEST April 20, 1896, page 114.5*

From these scriptures it is evident that the efficacy of the gospel, its power to salvation, is found in the fact that it is “God’s joyful message... concerning His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord,” who is “The Lord our Righteousness.” *Jeremiah 23:6.* Thus it appears that the gospel becomes the power of God unto salvation because of the righteousness which is revealed in it, and that this righteousness is found only in Christ, and is inseparable from Him. This is “the hope of the gospel... which is Christ in you the hope of glory: whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus.” “And ye are complete in Him.”*BEST April 20, 1896, page 114.6*

April 27, 1896

The Law in Christ or, the Relation Between the Law and the Gospel

WWP

W. W. Prescott

Wrong views concerning our relation to God's plan of salvation for us have arisen from failing to comprehend the fulness of the character of God. While it is true that "He delighteth in mercy" and "taketh pleasure... in those that hope in His mercy," it is also true that He is "of purer eyes than to behold evil," and that He will "execute judgment and justice in the earth." God requires that His own character, as revealed in Christ, should be the standard of character for His children. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." *Matthew 5:48*. "But as He which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation." *1 Peter 1:15*. *BEST April 27, 1896, page 122.1*

And abundant provision has been made in Christ that the expectation of God for man may be fully met. For He "hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places [or things] in Christ," and "hath chosen us in Him... that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love," and "hath made us accepted in the beloved." *Ephesians 1:3, 4, 6*. But all this is for a definite purpose. It is that we "being made free from sin and become servants to God" (*Romans 6:22*) should be found "righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless." *Luke 1:6*. "Thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins." *Matthew 1:21*. But there is no provision made to save people *in* their sins. *BEST April 27, 1896, page 122.2*

In order that man may intelligently cooperate with God in His purpose to restore His image in him, God has made a revelation to man of His own character as the standard of perfection, and the test of righteousness. Since God designs to renew His likeness in us, we may know what He is by what He requires of us. The holiness, the righteousness, and the goodness of God are set forth in His

law, which is declared to be “holy, just [righteous] and good,” and the perfection which He requires of us will be revealed in a life which is in harmony with “that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.” *Romans 12:2.BEST April 27, 1896, page 122.3*

Because “a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ” (*Galatians 2:16*), and because we “are not under the law but under grace” (*Romans 6:14*), some have fallen into the error of supposing that Christians have nothing whatever to do with the law of God. It is therefore well worth our while to consider the purposes served by the law, and the relation between the law and the gospel.*BEST April 27, 1896, page 122.4*

In order that it may be true of us that “the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin” (*1 John 1:7*), we must “confess our sins” (*1 John 1:9*), and we must be made aware of sin before we can confess it. This brings out the first purpose of the law, for by the law is the knowledge of sin (*Romans 3:20*), and “I had not known sin, but by the law; for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.” *Romans 7:7*. The way in which the law reveals sin appears from the fact that “all unrighteousness is sin” (*1 John 5:17*), and that the law reveals unrighteousness by defining righteousness. The law, being a transcript of the righteous character of God, is used by the Holy Spirit to “reprove the world of sin” (*John 16:8*), by showing men that they are “wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked” (*Revelation 3:17*) when their own characters are placed in contrast with the purity and holiness of God. When we thus see God we exclaim with Isaiah, “Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips” (*Isaiah 6:5*), and with Job we say, “I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes.” *Job 42:6*. All this is made plain in the Scripture. “Righteous art Thou, O Lord, and upright are Thy judgments. Thy testimonies that Thou hast commanded are righteous and very faithful!” “My tongue shall speak of Thy word; for all Thy commandments are righteousness.” *Psalms 119:137, 138, 172.BEST April 27, 1896, page 122.5*

But while the law thus makes known sin to us by setting forth the righteous character of God, and being itself righteousness, it is yet utterly unable to confer that righteousness upon us. “I do not

frustrate the grace of God; for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain." *Galatians 2:21*. "For if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe." *Galatians 3:21, 22*. Here is where the work of Christ avails for us, and the very object of that work is that the righteousness *defined* by the law, and *revealed* in the gospel, may be fulfilled in us. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." *Romans 8:3, 4*. "For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." *2 Corinthians 5:21*. *BEST April 27, 1896, page 122.6*

May 4, 1896

The Law in Christ or, the Relation Between the Law and the Gospel

WWP

W. W. Prescott

The righteousness of the law was fulfilled by Christ, who did “not come to destroy, but to fulfil” the law, and who by a life of perfect obedience to the Father’s will, wherein He “became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross,” was “made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.” *1 Corinthians 1:30*. “For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. Moreover the law entered that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound; that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.” *Romans 5:19-21*. *BEST May 4, 1896, page 130.1*

The work accomplished by Christ in behalf of man is more than to pay the penalty for a broken law; it includes the bringing of man into harmony with that law. He “gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” *Titus 2:14*. For this it became necessary not only that righteousness should be *imputed* to us, but *imparted* to us; not only that Christ should live *for* us, but that He should live *in* us; not only that we should be “*justified by faith*” (*Romans 5:1*), but that we should be “*sanctified by faith*.” *Acts 26:18*. So the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory [His character], the glory [the character] as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth.” *John 1:14*. Angels could convey messages for God, and could do deeds for God, but only the Son of God could reveal the righteousness of God by being God. *BEST May 4, 1896, page 130.2*

In His life among men Christ became the righteousness which was defined in the law. “The law was given by Moses but grace and truth [grace and the reality] came by Jesus Christ.” *John 1:17*. In the

law, considered merely as a code, we have only the form of truth, but Christ is the Truth. "Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God, and knowest His will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law; and art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a light of them which are in darkness, an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which has *the form* of knowledge and of the truth in the law." *Romans 2:17-20*. The law gives the *form*, but Christ is the *reality*. Christ had the law in His *heart*, and so His life was the law in living characters. This was set forth in the prophecy concerning His work centuries before He was "made of a woman": "I delight to do Thy will, O My God; yea, Thy law is within My heart." *Psalms 40:8*. *BEST May 4, 1896, page 130.3*

In His teaching Christ interpreted the spiritual character of the law, showing that to hate was to commit murder, to think impurely was to commit adultery, to covet was to be an idolater, and His life was so completely in harmony with the sacred precepts as interpreted by Him that He could challenge those who were constantly seeking something against Him with the inquiry, "Which of you convinceth Me of sin?" *John 8:46*. *BEST May 4, 1896, page 130.4*

And He "who did no sin" (*1 Peter 2:22*) wrought out this life of perfect righteousness not for Himself but for us, that the image of God might be again revealed in our lives. The law was within the heart of Christ, and He came to do the will of God, in order that the same law might be written in our hearts, and that we might be restored to the blessedness of doing God's will; that the *form* might become the *reality* in us. This is accomplished for each individual by his acceptance of the work of Christ for him through faith in the word of God, by opening the door of his heart to Christ, that He may become the very life of his life, so that he may be "saved by His life." *Romans 5:10*. This is righteousness by faith. This is being "found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." *Philippians 3:9*. *BEST May 4, 1896, page 130.5*

Thus we see that the law first gives knowledge of sin. It sets up a perfect standard of righteousness, and so defines the righteousness

required; but it cannot confer that righteousness. It does not make one a sinner; it simply reveals the fact that he is a sinner. It cannot give righteousness; it simply shows the need of righteousness. But God, who requires the righteousness of the law in our characters, has made provision that this righteousness shall be brought to us in Christ, who is the centre of the gospel. The standard of character which is defined by the law is presented to us in Christ in the gospel. So we read: "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ, unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference; for all have sinned and come short of the glory [the character] of God; being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time His righteousness; that He might be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." *Romans 3:21-26*. By the law sin is revealed; in the gospel righteousness is revealed. By the law the disease is made known; in the gospel of Christ the cure is found. This is the first step in the relation between the law and the gospel. *BEST May 4, 1896, page 130.6*

May 11, 1896

The Law in Christ or, the Relation Between the Law and the Gospel

WWP

W. W. Prescott

After we have come to Christ and are justified by faith, without the deeds of the law (*Romans 3:28*), after we have become "the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (*Galatians 3:26*), having received Him who is righteousness and the living law, what then is our relation to the law? This will perhaps best appear by considering the results of genuine faith in Christ. *BEST May 11, 1896, page 138.1*

To believe on Christ is to receive Christ; not to assent to a creed, but to accept a *life*; not to strive for the maintenance of certain outward forms, but to become "partakers of the divine nature." 2 *Peter 1:4*. Creeds and forms cannot save people from their sins. Terrible is the catalogue of the sins of those "having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." 2 *Timothy 3:1-5*. A new life must be imparted before man can "live unto God." "Except a man be born from above, he cannot see the kingdom of God." *John 3:3*. "For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation." *Galatians 6:15*, R.V. This experience depends upon the faith which each one exercises for himself, and "it is of faith, that it might be by grace." *Romans 4:16*. To all who sincerely pray the prayer, "Create in me a clean heart," (*Psalms 51:10*), the reply comes, "Believe ye that I am able to do this?... According to your faith be it unto you." *Matthew 9:28, 29*. "And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith" (1 *John 5:4*); but faith for victory is the "faith which worketh by love." *Galatians 5:6*. *BEST May 11, 1896, page 138.2*

"Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law." *Romans 3:31*. "This is the victory which overcometh the world, even our Christ made present with all His glorious power by faith;" but this is the Christ in whose heart is the law of God; who said of Himself, "I have kept my Father's

commandments" (*John 15:10*); who was and is the law of God in life, so that when the prayer, "that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith" (*Ephesians 3:17*), is answered, the law in Christ is "written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart." *2 Corinthians 3:3*. And thus do we establish the law.*BEST May 11, 1896, page 138.3*

"Where there is not only belief in God's word, but a submission of the will to Him-where the heart is yielded to Him, the affections fixed upon Him, there is faith, faith that works by love and purifies the soul. Through this faith the heart is renewed in the image of God. And the heart that in its unrenewed state is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be, now delights in its holy precepts." "God is love." *1 John 4:8*. His law is an expression of His love, and Christ is that law of love expressed in life; so when we receive Christ into our hearts, then love, the fruit of the Spirit, is received into our hearts, and "when the principle of love is implanted in the heart,... the new covenant promise is fulfilled, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them" (*Hebrews 8:10*)[*Steps to Christ, 60*]; for "love is the fulfilling of the law." *Romans 13:10*. And thus do we "establish the law" by faith.*BEST May 11, 1896, page 139.1*

But after the law is thus by faith established in the heart by abiding in Christ, and having Him, who is the living law, abide in us, then the fruit of such a union with Christ will appear in the life. "He that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit" (*John 15:5*), and thus are we "filled with the fruits of righteousness." *Philippians 1:11*. And now the law, which revealed sin but could not confer righteousness, witnesses to the character of the righteousness which we have received through faith in Christ. "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets." *Romans 3:21*. The law reveals sin by defining righteousness, by showing us the character of God. The gospel reveals righteousness. "Therein is the righteousness of God revealed." *Romans 1:17*. We receive this righteousness as the free gift of God in receiving Jesus Christ. The law cannot give us what we need. It urges us to Christ, where we receive what it demands but cannot bestow. Then we return to the same law, and it bears witness to the fact that the righteousness we

have received in Christ Jesus is the very righteousness which it demands but cannot impart.*BEST May 11, 1896, page 139.2*

This was God's plan for those who would believe in Christ. "God offered them in His Son the perfect righteousness of the law." [*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, 54*] If they would open their hearts fully to receive Christ, then the very life of God, His love, would dwell in them, transforming them into His own image; and thus through God's free gift they would possess the righteousness which the law requires.*BEST May 11, 1896, page 139.3*

May 18, 1896

The Law in Christ or, the Relation Between the Law and the Gospel

WWP

W. W. Prescott

The words “abolish,” “take away,” “destroy,” and “change” have been so persistently connected with the law by some public teachers that there exists in the minds of many people the honest conviction that all which is expressed by these words was done to the law by Christ. It is true that He came to “abolish” something, and to “take away” something, and to “destroy” something, and to “change” something; but it is important that we should know just what it was that He abolished, and what it was that He took away, and what it was that He destroyed, and what it was that He intended to change by His work in behalf of man. This we can easily learn from the Scriptures. *BEST May 18, 1896, page 146.1*

WHAT WAS ABOLISHED

It is said of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, that He “*hath abolished death*, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.” *2 Timothy 1:10*. Death is the result of sin. “Sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.” *James 1:15*. But “sin is the transgression of the law.” *1 John 3:4*. Christ, therefore, came to abolish that which is the result of being out of harmony with the law, and He did it, not by abolishing the law, but by bringing us into harmony with the law. *BEST May 18, 1896, page 146.2*

WHAT WAS TAKEN AWAY

We read that Christ “was manifested to *take away our sins*.” *1 John 3:5*. He is the sin-bearer, “who His own self carried up our sins in His body to the tree, that we having died unto sins, might live unto righteousness.” *1 Peter 2:24*, R.V., margin. Sin is lawlessness, and Christ was manifested to take away, not the law, but lawlessness. *BEST May 18, 1896, page 146.3*

WHAT HE CAME TO DESTROY

The attitude of Christ toward the law is set forth in the prophecy which says: "He will magnify the law and make it honourable." *Isaiah 42:21*. In His sermon on the mount, which is itself but the interpretation of the principles contained in the words spoken from Mount Sinai, Christ said: "Think not that I am come to destroy the law or the prophets; I am, not come to destroy, but to fulfil." *Matthew 5:17*. He "came to explain the relation of the law of God to man, and to illustrate its precepts by His own example of obedience." [*Desire of Ages* (DA), p. 308] But we are taught that "for this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might *destroy the works of the devil*." *1 John 3:8*. The works of the devil are those which are contrary to God's law. "The devil sinneth from the beginning," and in every case "sin is the transgression of the law." *BEST May 18, 1896, page 146.4*

Furthermore, Christ came to destroy the devil himself. Satan had introduced into this world rebellion against God and His law, and Christ's mission and work were to put an end to that rebellion and the instigator of it. In order to do that, He took our flesh, "that through death He might *destroy him that had the power of death*, that is the devil." *Hebrews 2:14. BEST May 18, 1896, page 146.5*

WHAT HE CAME TO CHANGE

It is a blessed thing to know that a change was wrought by Christ in giving Himself for man. There was certainly need that a change should be made. Men were far from righteousness, "being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them" (*Ephesians 4:18*), "having no hope and without God in the world." *Ephesians 2:12*. "But God, who is rich in mercy,... hath quickened us together with Christ,... and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." *Ephesians 2:4-6*. And thus "we all... are *changed into the same image* from glory to glory." *2 Corinthians 3:18*. But more even than a change of character has been provided for us, for "we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who *shall change our vile body*, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body." *Philippians 3:20, 21*. "We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the

twinkling of an eye, at the last trump." *1 Corinthians 15:51, 52.* Glorious change! A renewed character and a renewed body! This is the fulness of the salvation provided for us in Jesus Christ.*BEST May 18, 1896, page 146.6*

It thus becomes evident from the teaching of the Scriptures that Christ came to abolish, not, the law, but death; to take away, not the law, but our sins; to destroy, not the law, but the devil and his works; to change, not the law, but us. He did all this "by the sacrifice of Himself." *Hebrews 9:26.* If the law could have been changed or abolished, Christ need not have died.*BEST May 18, 1896, page 146.7*

SIN TRANSIENT; THE LAW ETERNAL

In different ways God teaches that sin is transient, while the law is eternal. While Jesus was teaching on one occasion "the scribes and Pharisees brought unto Him a woman taken in adultery," and asked what should be done in such a case, not because they desired to be instructed, but "tempting Him, that they might have to accuse Him." After her accusers had made their charge, "Jesus stooped down, and with His finger wrote on the ground." *John 8:3, 6.* "Although doing this without apparent design, Jesus was tracing on the ground, in legible characters, the particular sins of which the woman's accusers were guilty." [*The Spirit of Prophecy, Vol. 2* (2SP), p. 350] Thus Jesus wrote the record of sins *in the sand*. How easily could this record be obliterated! A gust of wind or a dash of water, and it is gone! But God wrote His law with His finger *upon tables of stone*, -an unchangeable and imperishable record of His own character. This same law He writes in the heart of the believer, there to remain to all eternity; for "he that doeth the will of God abideth forever." *1 John 2:17.* Sin, and death the result of sin, may be taken away; for "the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (*1 John 1:7*), and "death is swallowed up in victory, (*1 Corinthians 15:54*), but "all Thy commandments are righteousness" and "Thy righteousness is an everlasting righteousness." *Psalms 119:172, 142.* "Hearken unto Me, ye that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is My law;" "My salvation shall be forever, and My righteousness shall not be abolished." *Isaiah 51:7, 6.* "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and to-day, yea, and forever."

The very charge made against God by Satan was that His plan of government was defective, and His law imperfect, and the whole controversy between Christ and Satan has been waged over this point: Shall God's rule be acknowledged and His law respected in this world, or shall the rebellion succeed, and the kingdom of Satan be established here? Is it not clear, therefore, that everyone who today takes the position that God's law has been changed or abolished is really putting himself on the side of the "god of this world" (2 *Corinthians* 4:4) and in opposition to "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ"? *Ephesians* 1:3. But God will show to the satisfaction of the universe, even in the very face of Satan's work, that His law is perfect and His government just. "Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy name? for Thou only art holy; for all nations shall come and worship before Thee; for Thy judgments are made manifest." *Revelation* 15:4.*BEST May 18, 1896, page 146.9*

May 25, 1896

The Law in Christ or, the Relation Between the Law and the Gospel

WWP

W. W. Prescott

A STANDARD NEEDED

But if God's law has been changed or abolished, there is no longer any standard by which to test the character of the righteousness which men claim to have received by faith. Each one is then at liberty to erect his own standard to suit his own inclinations. Such teaching as this is now bearing its legitimate fruit in the world. God's holy law is not brought to bear upon the consciences of men to convince of sin, as in former days; hence the need of the Saviour is not felt to the same degree; and without a standard with which to test their professed righteousness, the counterfeit passes for the genuine, and religion is reproached. It is universally acknowledged that there is need of having a standard in all the transactions between man and man, and so we have the standard of weight, the standard of measure, etc. Without these standards there would be the utmost confusion in the business world. Moreover, these standards must not be variable. A variable standard is no standard at all. But is man wiser than God? "Were men free to depart from the Lord's requirements, and set up a standard of duty for themselves, there would be a variety of standards to suit different minds, and the government would be taken out of the Lord's hands. The law of self would be erected, the will of man would be supreme, and the high and holy will of God-His purpose of love toward His creatures-would be dishonoured, disrespected." [*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing*, 51, 52.] *BEST May 25, 1896, page 154.1*

OFFICE OF THE LAW

The office of the law in making known sin, and in witnessing to the righteousness obtained through faith in Christ may be illustrated by the way in which a mirror is used. A man may learn by looking into it

that his face is smirched with smut. The mirror did not put the smut there, neither can it take it away. It simply reveals its presence. Some other means must be used to remove the dirt; but when this is done, the same mirror testifies that his face is clean. But suppose the man should destroy or throw away the mirror because it revealed the presence of the dirt, and yet, not fully satisfied with this course, should endeavour to make himself clean, what will now satisfy him of the success of his efforts? He may *feel* better because he has made some effort to be clean; but at the same time he may have done only an incomplete work, or he may have made matters worse. So we are defiled by sin. The law reveals that fact, yet cannot cleanse; but there is “a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness” (*Zechariah 13:1*), in which we may wash and be clean. The law testifies to the character of the work wrought for us by “Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood.” *Revelation 1:5*. But if the law is variable or has been abolished, we are left in uncertainty. Then self-righteousness may pass for righteousness because one *feels* satisfied in trying to meet the standard which he himself has set up. *BEST May 25, 1896, page 154.2*

THE PLEDGE OF AN IMMUTABLE LAW

The fact that the law of God is not done away, is the pledge of our security in heaven. “So speak ye, and so do, as they that shall be judged by the law of liberty.” *James 2:12*. That law is the standard in the judgment. Harmony with the law of God is the condition of the entrance into the kingdom. Everyone who applies for admission is tested by it. The law is a transcript of God’s character. Everyone must meet this standard in its perfection, and those who do not reach it are shut out of the kingdom. We cannot meet the standard except as we receive Christ; but when we have received Christ, we know we have that which will meet the test. If anyone could be admitted to the kingdom who was out of harmony with God’s law, sin would be transferred into the world to come. The very fact that the law of God is neither changed nor abolished is our safety in the eternal kingdom, the pledge that “affliction shall not rise up the second time.” *BEST May 25, 1896, page 154.3*

June 1, 1896

The Law in Christ or, the Relation Between the Law and the Gospel

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THE LAW OUT OF CHRIST AND THE LAW IN CHRIST

Observe the difference between the law of God as a rigid code and the same law coming to us in Christ. A command which out of Christ is a rigid code, in Christ becomes a living promise. The law, out of Christ, simply a rigid code, says, "Thou shalt," and "thou shalt not." But that same law in Christ becomes a living promise. "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises." *2 Peter 1:4*. "In every command or injunction that God gives, there is a promise, the most positive, underlying the commandment." [*Thoughts From the Mount of Blessing, 76*] When we read: "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth," that is clearly a promise. When we read in the law: "Thou shalt not kill," we read it out of Christ simply as a command, or we may know it in Christ as a living promise. That is, He in His life promises each one, "Thou shalt not kill." I cannot of myself help hating, which is breaking the sixth commandment. I am trying not to do it, and yet I do it. I turn about, and find that that same command in Christ, written by the Spirit of the living God on the fleshy tables of the heart, has brightened into a promise, and it says, "I have a promise to make to you. You have received Me; you shall not kill." *BEST June 1, 1896, page 164.1*

Outside of Christ, as a code, the law says, "Thou shalt not steal;" but I cannot help it. Then I turn about, and find that that law in Christ has brightened into a promise, and it reads to me, "You are the one that has been stealing. I have a promise to make to you. You shall not steal." *BEST June 1, 1896, page 164.2*

The law reveals sin by defining righteousness, and then drives us to Christ, who is the centre of the gospel. There the righteousness of the law is revealed. [See Appendix A, Section A.] *BEST June 1,*

COMPLETE OBEDIENCE

Partial obedience is a very thorny path; full obedience is the easy yoke promised us. When we tell the Lord that we will keep all His commandments, He immediately takes possession of us, and says we shall. We do not abolish the law through faith; on the contrary, "it is faith, and faith only, that makes us partakers of the grace of Christ, which enables us to render obedience." [*Steps to Christ*, 60, 61.] But this is accomplished, not by commanding the believer, "Thou shalt," but by shedding abroad in his heart the love of God which gives him the blessed assurance of "Thou wilt." Not, thou must fulfil the law, else thou canst not live; but, because thou art now living in "the Living One," thou wilt fulfil the law. This is righteousness by faith. This is the gospel.*BEST June 1, 1896, page 164.4*

The same standard of righteousness has been set before man in all ages. In olden time the instruction was: "Fear God and keep His commandments; for this is the whole duty of man." *Ecclesiastes 12:13*. And the death of Christ did not make any change in this teaching; for "circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God" (*1 Corinthians 7:19*), and "this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not grievous." *1 John 5:3*. Furthermore, the provision has been the same in all ages for meeting this standard of righteousness. The Lord said of old, through the prophet: "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit within you, and *cause you to walk in My statutes*, and *ye shall keep My judgments*, and do them." *Ezekiel 36:26, 27*. The same ground of hope for success in the Christian life is held out to us in the inspired prayer of the great apostle: "Now the God of peace,... *make you perfect* in every good work *to do His will*, working in you that which is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ." *Hebrews 13:20, 21*.*BEST June 1, 1896, page 164.5*

A SUMMARY

We are now prepared to summarise the results of our study upon the relation between the law and the gospel. We have found that the law reveals sin by defining the standard of righteousness, and that in the gospel the righteousness required by the law is revealed. We have found that the gospel is the gospel of *Christ*, and that the righteousness which is revealed in it is the righteousness wrought out for us by Christ through a life of perfect obedience to the law of God. Thus the gospel is God's provision not merely for fulfilling the requirements of the law *for* us in Christ, but also for fulfilling the requirements of the same law *in* us through Christ, and this is accomplished by receiving Christ, the very embodiment of the law, into our hearts by faith, so that "it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me." *Galatians 2:20*, R.V., margin. *BEST June 1, 1896, page 165.1*

The fruit of such a union with Christ is seen in a life which is in harmony with that same law which was the inspiration of His life, and the law which at first revealed sin now bears witness to the genuine character of that righteousness "which is by faith of Jesus Christ." And thus what the law could not do in that it was weak through our flesh, has been done for us by putting that same law into the flesh in Christ, and through Him into our flesh, "that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." *Romans 8:4*. *BEST June 1, 1896, page 165.2*

This brings us to the conclusion that THE GOSPEL IS SIMPLY THE LAW IN CHRIST, and therefore an attempt to abolish the law is an attempt to abolish Christ and the gospel, and an attempt to change the law is in attempt to change the character of Christ and to thwart the purpose of the gospel. A heart filled with love to Christ and the spirit of truth will seek no such results, but will thankfully say: "Abundant peace have they who love Thy law; and it is no stumbling block to them." *Psalms 119:165*, Spurrill's Translation. See margin of A.V. *BEST June 1, 1896, page 165.3*

